

# *A LETTER FROM AUNT ELSIE*



By Elsie Reeck

## *Acknowledgements*

First, I want to thank and give credit to all my dear friends, especially Ruth Koop who has painfully read my poor handwriting, typed my story, and put it on the computer.

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Many other good friends from my First Methodist Church in Pinellas Park, Florida who have encouraged me to write this journal, this being a great help in my loneliness since my dear husband, Donald, passed away and I have been a semi-invalid.

My prayerful thanks to you all.

It is now October 1998 and I am at home in Pinellas Park, Florida. After a period of unfortunate happenings in these past three Octobers, I am now a semi-invalid, getting about without pressure on my right foot, using either a walker or wheelchair.

In October 1995 I was out working in my garden in early morning when I tripped on a root, falling and fracturing my right hip. My garden area faces on a busy thoroughfare, so my call for help wasn't heard for a long time over the din of traffic. However, finally, my good neighbor John Mindola came to my rescue and had me on the way to the hospital where I was very fortunate to get into the hands of a very fine orthopedic surgeon who replaced my hip with a good working new one. I was hospitalized for a short time, in therapy in the hospital and at home, until I was able to walk again with excellent healing in good time.

So back to my busy life until the next October, 1996, when I had an appointment to be discharged from the doctor's care. On this morning I went outdoors to pick up my morning paper and as I bent over to pick it up, a gust of wind, like we often have in Florida, blew me down onto my driveway pavement. This was at the front of my house at 6:30 a.m. This is a retirement village where most people sleep with their windows closed. I called and screamed for help, and it was a long time before a young girl visiting her parents came to help me. She was very efficient. She got my credentials, phoned for an ambulance, even covered me with my afghan, and got me a pillow for my head as it too was bleeding. I found out later my rescuer was Mary Leonhardt, the daughter of new neighbors from Dayton, Ohio, Gene and Ruth Koop. Mary and Ruth followed me to the hospital and saw me after x-rays to let me know they cared. I'll never forget that!

This time I was very lucky to have Dr. Stephen Warren to take care of me. I had sustained a fracture of my right femur. This is a bit more complicated bone to injure, so I was in the hospital longer, in therapy longer, but finally ready, I thought, to be discharged as healed in a few weeks. Unfortunately, again I had to go to the hospital for a G.I. series and was tossed about in positions I hadn't been able to accomplish. However, I hoped it wouldn't be harmful as I had been walking for several blocks every morning for a few weeks.

That evening in October 1997 I had locked my door and hung up my phone to recharge. At about 9 p.m. I walked from my kitchen to my living room, and all of a sudden I found myself on the floor. I didn't trip or slip, evidently the bone just gave way. I wondered how I could get help at this hour. My phone I thought was up in charge where I was in the habit of putting it, my door was locked, and neighbors were probably off to bed also. I finally was able to crawl on my left side and back to see if I could get to the front door to unlock it. I wouldn't have been able to unlock my door, but my Guardian Angel or my God was with me, and I saw my phone laying on the table and could reach it. I'll never know why I didn't do what was my usual habit of putting it up on charge. Fortunately, again I was able to get the rescue this time.

But this time my good Doctor Warren told me after he had labored five and a half hours to put me together, he said he was sure I would never walk again. I had two choices -- let him take my leg off, or I would have to spend the rest of my life just dragging it around with me. After three operations in three years, I just couldn't face the amputation at my age 91, so I am now a semi-invalid.

This time, after all the hospitalization, the therapy and returning home, helpless to take care of myself without help, my nephew Walter Bailey and his wife Shirley came down from Maine, helped me with the decision to go to an assisted living institution, which I did for six months. They promised me therapy and other helpful things, but as it happens, the help in these homes don't stay long, and they are always too short of help to give me what I'm paying for and needed, so I decided to come home after six months.

I have had varying experiences with paid help, with no help from Medicare in that respect. But finally found one lady, through my church, come to me. It was an answer to my prayers having her and being home. However, she was taken ill. I was able after a spell to have another church person from my friend's church to help me for a while, and then she had family obligations. The next one was not fitted in any way to care for me in my home, but for the last four weeks, my Guardian Angel was with me and I have a wonderful helper, Jeanine Rhoades.

Now after three years, and it's October 1998, I am hoping before another October rolls around I can do something constructive before my brain becomes fractured. Also, I want to say that since I have been a widow for 15 years, my many friends, especially George and Mary Mook, have always seen to it that I kept food on my table and had a ride to the doctor's whenever I needed it. What would people do without friends?

Now I would like to write a story about caring, devotion, faith and friends, happiness, love, poverty, sad news, and some humor, I hope, and confidence in myself and trust in my God.

After months of listening to things like hate, lust, murder and rape on the television, also in books I have read, I will not write about these things so you might as well not read any further if that is what you like to hear or read.

I want to begin my family story about what I feel sad about. I never had a grandparent on either my mother's or father's side, and a father for only two years of my life. So I feel I have been cheated out of a lot of love other children enjoy. Visiting grandmothers always must have been a joyous occasion. But I want to say that I was blessed with a sainted mother who was never down and always instilled this part of her character in me. What a blessing it has been.

I would like to start my story at my roots --which began in the early 1800's.

My grandfather on my mother's side was Carl Ludwig Gross, born in Berlin, Germany in 1823. He was an engineer traveling to many European countries helping to set up new methods of machinery in factories. He was married in Germany in 1844 and had one son, Julius Fernandez Gross born in 1846. His wife died soon after.

In the 1850's he came to Gotenborg, Sweden, to set up a new process of machinery called the Piratia printer named after the Frenchman Pirrotin who invented this machine. This machine was able to print cloth for clothing with three colors in one step; it was developed in 1830.

It was on this job when he came to Gotenborg that he met Emille Augusta Borge~~u~~son who was born in Gotenborg. She was single, and according to the court house records, she was a Gotenborg beauty. I think that was so unusual to print in a record, but wouldn't it have been nice if that could have continued down through the ages? They were married in 1855 and raised a family of seven children, two boys and five girls, plus caring for the step brother Julius who grew up as a musician and was able to speak five languages.

Their first child was Johanna, and she married Carl Petterson and moved to the island of Ma~~x~~strand, outside of Gotenborg. The second child, another girl, was named Hedwig Matilda who came to America many years later. The third child was another girl named Maria Charlotta who married Carl Victor Carlson and lived near Stockholm and had seven children.

The fourth child was a son, Magnus. He studied to be a jeweler and lived in Landskrona. The fifth child was Agnes Josephine who married a banker politician named Johnson and had two daughters, Agnes and Marie. They (Agnes and Marie) never married and visited Mother in America. The sixth child was another son, Carl Theodore Victor, who was trained to be a florist. He lives in Gotenborg and is married to Agnes Larson. They have one son, Lennart, who lives in Askim.

Number seven was my mother, Emily Augusta, born in 1867. When my mother was still an infant, there was a plague in Sweden. My mother told me they called it "rose fever", no doubt like our scarlet fever. Her mother and father both died from it. No record that I have has showed the year that they died, but my mother says she was just a baby.

My grandmother, Emille Augusta Borge~~u~~son, had two maiden sisters who lived in Gotenborg, Britta and Hannah. They ran an inn or hostel, whatever they called it in that day. Travel was mostly by horseback or horse and carriage, and they took all the eight orphans into their home, educated them, and brought them up. As I have told you, the boys were musician, jeweler and florist. The girls were taught homemaking, dress making, and millinery, all kinds of hand work, such as knitting and crocheting. My mother preferred millinery, but she was an excellent cook, dressmaker, and homemaker.

I've often wondered what their fun time was like when they were all together and growing up. When I'd ask my mother, she would say they liked to dance, sing, enjoy winter sports, and played some games. They were taught to be very polite and friendly, and to appreciate little gifts from friends and relatives, like a bouquet of flowers.

Flowers make up a great part of one's village or home in Sweden, and even in the cities, flower boxes are on most window sills, no matter how many stories high the house or business is. In the summer there would be group dances in the parks, around a may-pole, as they called it, and that seems to be the fun for them and entertaining for the adults.

At the age of 19 years, my mother yearned to join her half brother who had gone to the United States, to the city of Boston, where he was making his living playing in bands. I think this step-brother felt very close to my mother as she was so young when she became an orphan, and he had that experience of losing his own mother at an early age.

So, it seems she made up her mind she was going to join him in Boston, Massachusetts. She didn't have any knowledge of the English language, but with her mind made up, she packed up all her treasures, and with courage and her "Hembygod", or what we call a hope chest, very sturdy clothes trunk with wide bands of metal around it, she boarded a ship for America, I believe it was the White Star Line, for the long trip to America all by herself.

I still had that "Hembygod" in my attic in Houlton, Maine, in 1950. My Uncle Julius, her half-brother, secured a good job for her in a doctor's family, as nanny to two little girls. So as they grew and learned to talk and read, so did my Mother.

A few years later, my Uncle Julius, after marrying, joined a band hired by the government to play at the Maine Veterans newly established home in Togus, Maine. After the Civil War, there was a great need for a home for disabled veterans, and this was a first of its kind, and it still functions as a large military hospital. The bandmaster's name was Professor Thiene, and he played there for over 40 years, died there, and was buried with all the veterans.

My Uncle Julius and wife bought a small farm in Augusta. It is in walking distance of the Veterans Home. The government had a nice bandstand built in about the center of the hospital complex. It held a 24-piece band in the summer, and 14 pieces in the winter. Hundred of people and visitors came to enjoy the concerts. It was real good music.

My uncle Julius went into the hospital and visited with the patients often. He became acquainted with them, hearing all about their experiences. He was a veteran himself. These men were ill patients; some of them came from far away and never got to see their families. I think in a way he was always looking for someone who

would make a good husband for his sister who had come down to visit from Boston. She was now 31 years and told him she enjoyed this area. It reminded her of Sweden, also, she would like to stay. There was a man from Maine taking leave of absence so he could look for a small home and small piece of land to buy. His name was Warren Bailey and my uncle introduced him to my mother. Soon it seemed they got along real well. By this time she had learned the American language and was looking for someone for a friend. After about a year he proposed and they were married in Augusta, Maine on October 11, 1899 (an October that was good for her). She was 32 and he was 64, but he already had found a small home and piece of land, so they had a home to move into Chelsea, near the railroad which could get them out for shopping in Randolph or back to the Togus home.

Warren Bailey continued to buy up small pieces of land and encouraged the veterans who could be discharged to buy and build and get settled there. So that was what he did for his income. This union of my father and mother, no doubt, was not an exciting romance as we look for and long for, but my mother often said "I was just an old man's darling."

A short time after their marriage, my mother's older sister, Aunt Hedwig, came to America and my Uncle Julius sponsored her. He also found her a veteran to get acquainted with and finally marry. He was not as ambitious as my father was, and I think he liked his bottle. So poor Aunt Hedwig didn't get things done very easily and was so glad to be near her sister and happy to spend many holidays with us. She always stayed a week at Christmas time so she could make beautiful clothing for my many dolls, even embroidered, hem stitched, and put lace on their underwear.

She had a good time talking a mile a minute in Swedish and singing and showing off, with mother, to mother's friends, doing the Swedish dances, the Shottish and Polka.

Right here I'd like to give you a bit of history of Maine's National Soldiers Home. It was the first of its kind in America, established in October 1866. President Grant visited it in 1872, and by 1886 there were 1,700 veterans there.

In 1875, after the Mexican war, there were hundreds more veterans. The government then purchased 500 more acres of land and constructed a Medicare building, a 560 bed unit and a coronary unit, renal analysis, and dental clinic. Togus celebrated its 125 years in 1995 as the oldest administrators facility.

I have had a nephew employed there for many years. He was a veteran, and now one of my grand nieces is taking part of her college course in pathology there.

All of this area in Maine was just beginning to grow fast because of good transportation on the Kennbe River from the ocean as far as Skowhegan and the building of the Maine Central Railroad. Gardiner was given a charter as a city in 1845. It is just across the river from the town of Randolph, united by a steel bridge. These

two places were the nearest places for people to do any needed amount of shopping for the people at Togus and Chelsea, so the Kennebec Central Railroad track was laid through woods and open fields for a distance of five miles. The track was only two feet wide from Randolph to Togus. The railroad was opened July 1894 and ran for 19 years. So it helped in building up quite a section of Chelsea along the railroad tracks. So plots of land were much easier sold, helping my father in this respect.

The train was fondly called "The Kicking Critter" with five passenger cars, very comfortable cane covered seats, seating two people on each side of car. Also, cars for transporting fuel, food staples and large baggage. It made four trips a day also on Sundays. The fare from Randolph to Togus was 30 cents round trip, and for Chelsea citizens 5 cents to ride to Randolph or Togus.

It was really fun to ride this little train. After we moved from the country to Randolph into town, the station was just across the street from our house, and we often took the train to Togus to hear the concerts, and also to visit my Aunt Hedwig in Chelsea and my Uncle Julius who lived within walking distance of the railroad station in Togus.

The engineer was Frank Sanford, and he was so nice to everyone he met. Everyone was sad when the railroad closed down in 1939. By then there was the beginning of automobiles and better roads.

My dear Mother was a great homemaker, and in 1900 on September 13th, she and her husband produced a son, George Warren Bailey. At this time they were residing in Pittston, Maine. From there they moved to a small farm in West Bowdoin. This small township had only one school, grades one through five, with one teacher. My Mother, known now as a good cook and homemaker, was chosen to board the school teacher, so the Baileys became the hope of all future school teachers, for the length of time we lived in W. Bowdoin. I'll say here that the two teachers we had in our home were sisters, and even in the 1950's one came to my home in Houlton, Maine, asking about my Mother who had passed on, but she came and spent the night with Donald (my husband) and me. Over the years we were often visited by people Mother had boarded. She usually found room and she appreciated the extra money. She always said, "Where there's heart room, there's house room."

When my brother, George, was four years old, my Mother was notified she had been left an inheritance in Sweden from her Aunt's estate who had brought up all her brothers and sisters.

At that time, and it may be so today, to accept an inheritance you must come to the country where it had been established to collect it. So off to Sweden she went proudly with her four year old son, George. I think all of the relatives of my Mother had heard about their coming, and it seems they were invited here, there, and everywhere to see all of the family, so they stayed for six months.



When they were in Stockholm visiting Mother's sister Marie Johnson and family, Marie's husband was a banker, and I believe had a part in the Government as we was summoned to King Gustav's palace for meetings. He had a carriage and a span of horses to drive there so thought he must take his little American nephew to meet the King. I think he must have been quite special as my Mother said they passed him around to sit on even the King's lap. Wasn't it a shame he wasn't old enough to enjoy all this adoration or remember it? And, of course, he loved riding in the carriage with a span of horses.

On arriving back in New York, to greet his father again, my dear little brother had forgotten all the English language he had learned and came back greeting my father in Swedish. That really didn't sit well with his father, so right then and there my father forbid my Mother to teach any more children they might have the Swedish language. That is another sad thing for me as I would have loved to have even known a bit of often used words and phrases, for as it turned out, my father passed away when I was only two years old. He died on my brother's eighth birthday. As I grew older, my Mother often sang songs to me in Swedish and recited poetry that she loved, but she had made a promise and she wouldn't break it, so I never learned any Swedish. Perhaps, some day before my story is finished, I'll meet up with a Swedish friend who can help me write a few lines of Swedish.

After my father died, it was pretty rough going for my Mother. The only way my Mother knew how she could keep my brother and I in our home together was to take in more boarders, do cooking, and do dressmaking.

I haven't told you she welcomed a baby son, Carl Theodore, in August just a month before my father died, and lost him in November from some intestinal trouble.

We had our little farm, of course, so we could keep food on the table as we always had a nice garden, a few hens, and a cow which my brother George had learned to milk, but here again my Mother worked hard and prayed that the good Lord would come to her aid.

A few months went by before a good friend and buddy of my father's, where he was visiting the night he died, got in touch with my Mother and asked her if she would consider taking him in as a boarder with the understanding he could have some of his family come to visit at times. Mother only knew of this man through the things my father had told her, but she knew he was a good man and anxious to get out of the Soldiers Home. He too, knew Mother must need help as my father was with him when he dropped dead. On my brother's eighth birthday, my father had said he didn't want to be at home when all the kids were there for the birthday party for my brother. I am sure my Mother thought perhaps this was an answer to her prayers for helping her stay at home and keep her children. After, it seemed that the request for a place to live by John Cutter was the answer to prayers because for one thing it was pretty scary to live in the country without a man in the house, and the only boarder she had then was the school teacher.

After a few visits and planning for both himself and my mother, she was happy and grateful to say he could come as her boarder. So in between what she received in board from both the school teacher and Mr. Cutter, plus my father's small pension, Mother felt she could carry on and keep us all well and alive.

She claimed that the good Lord always answers your prayers if you ask Him and believe in Him. I have to agree with her for I am sure, after all my years for my faith, He or my Guardian Angel has been there for me.

After a while, Mr. Cutter felt at home, and he asked my Mother if he could have his sister, Lottie Hillman, from Seattle, Washington come for a visit. This would be the first time he had seen any of his family since he was in the Army. Well, it was a great reunion and meant so much to them she then asked Mother if she minded if she asked her son Benjamin who lived in St. Paul, Minnesota, if he could visit. He was a charming young man, and of course, being just three years old, I thought he was some kind of God. He was so taken with me, so he said, and made me promise I would write to him when I learned how to write a letter -- a promise I kept.

Then my Mother found out Lottie Hillman had a daughter who had married a lawyer in Portland, Maine, and could he visit too. In no time, our house was filled up with overnight and sometimes longer periods, with very nice people, and we were able to know and understand Mr. Cutter better. He, too, was a very entertaining person who could play the violin, the accordion, and the Jewsharp. He said he had no lessons in music, but he must have had perfect pitch and was so proud of his accomplishments. He came to us with his instruments and his big trunk filled with all his other possessions, I guess. We never saw what was in the trunk, only what clothes he wanted to wear or have Mother wash.

He did have one book of poetry that he seemed to treasure. I finally found out it was written by Mark Twain and given by him to Bloodsgood Cutter, a man he said traveled a good deal with him and helped him become a better person. Mr. Cutter told us this was his father or uncle. I can't quite remember, but Mr. Cutter, our friend, was buried in his plot when he passed on. It was in or near Flushing, NY.

My Mother was always glad to welcome all visitors and set a very tempting table for all. Our guests seemed to enjoy my brother and especially this 2-3 year old, Elsie, would never forget all this adulation that seemed to go on for years. This was about all I remember about our home in W. Bowdoin. There was a big hill on one side of our home which made a great sliding place in winter. It was here Mother strung her clothes line too, as often we got tangled up in the cord, it came tumbling down with the slide wrapped around wet clothes upsetting my poor Mother no end.

Then there was the small shed roof that would be drifted in snow up to the top and made a challenge for my brother in being able to jump on and off it and urging me to do the same, which sometimes laid me low for a bit. However, I always recovered

and still enjoyed all the challenges of winter that my brother made me involved in, but it seems that's what big brothers always enjoy doing..

At the time when I was approaching the age of four, Mr. Cutter, my Mother, and the school teacher were discussing the possibility of starting school soon. The school here was only five grades, no kindergarten, and my brother was ready for more schooling where he could go until high school time. So that meant a search for a farm or place where we both could attend school and walk to such a school and, most importantly, to find a house suitable for us all and one my Mother had to figure out how she could buy.

It was very apparent that Mr. Cutter had made up his mind to stay with us, go in on the purchase with the sale of this W. Bowdoin house and buy a small farm where we could have a garden, a barn, a few chickens, couple of pigs, apple and fruit trees, and near enough to walk to both schools.

He would get lawyer Sanborn to help us find such a place, make out papers in Mother's name, and she could be his housekeeper. Another answer to prayers. This had to be done before the school sessions were to open and luckily such a place was found in the town of Randolph--a really made to order one for all of us. Both George and I could walk to our schools, with about 15 acres of land, lots of apple trees, pear and plum trees too, a nice cold cellar under the house, plenty of huge rooms, a nice porch, a barn and outside buildings for livestock, and a nice deep well with an oaken bucket. So they bought the house in 1910. Now that was a great solution for all, and Mr. Cutter could see that he could invite some or all of his children, at one time or another, to come for a visit.

My Mother did not know how many of Mr. Cutter's family there were, and my Mother too wanted her family to come visit at times also. But it was the best solution for all as it turned out.

After we got settled in our new home, settled in our schools, George and I, the Cutter family began to show up. He finally told us he had two sons and two daughters, some living in New York and some in New Jersey. Three were married with children. Oh boy! I guess Mother had inherited another family.

As you read on, over the many years that was our new family right through to his grandchildren. Also, in many ways, it was a very happy time for all of us most of the time, but always much entertaining to do.

Sometime during the year 1910 we had moved to our new farm home in Randolph and were very busy getting settled. There had been some furniture left in our newly bought home, but then we also had many rooms, such as small ones and large ones. No doubt when the building was planned, it was for a large family.

First we had to be sure that George and I got registered in our schools for the coming Fall term. Mine would be school with just four grades, and that would be just about a mile from our house, just a good walk for a five-year-old to get rid of all that extra energy. George's school, Randolph Grammar School with grades from five to high school was about two miles away, up and down hills, so he had to plan on longer hours for school than I did.

Every day was quite exciting, exploring the new house and shopping for furniture and life's necessities. So we visited many antique and used furniture stores and got acquainted with shopping. The new house was a two-story clapboard house painted white, in good condition, set back from the roadway about the depth of a house lot, so I was glad we could have a nice lawn and a place for a croquet set, a game they played in those days which was very popular. There was a nice side porch facing you as you drove in, covered with nice green ivy vines.

Inside a door led into a wide hallway with a stairway on the left with a nice handrail and banister. On the right was a large room with four windows, a room they called the parlor in those days, and an organ had been left there. Walking out into the hall and into the house further on the right were two rooms, one large and one small. To the left was a very large room which we felt would be our dining room. There had been a fireplace there, but it was closed off. But the mantle was left, and a nice shelf. We thought it would be a good place to hang our stockings on at Christmas. A door leading out into a spacious room taking in all that end of the house was apparently a kitchen and a sitting room being divided by a large cook stove.

On the kitchen side were plenty of high closets, a sink with pump, because we would get water from the well out front, which had a nice topping where an old oaken bucket set.

There were nice big windows all over the house so we knew it would be bright and cheerful. In that room there was a stairway leading down to the cellar, a doorway enclosing the back stairway, also a door going out to a storage building and privy. Beyond that was a barn with two animal stalls, room for all tools used there, and one whole side was the place for a hay mow. Of course on a farm, one must cut the hay and store it for the animals for food for the winter months. Just seeing that I thought that would be fun at haying time, riding on the hay rack and coming in to tamp the hay down in the barn. I could see and find so many things I'd be doing.

Underneath the barn was a chicken house, and beyond a nice yard for them. Down over a little slope across from that was a nice looking small building which we found out had three rooms probably used for different kinds of storage, but George could see where he could have a nice place for a shop if he could get some work repairing bicycles, etc, and earn a bit of spending money, which he would be using to good advantage for many years while he was in grammar school. He would rather do this than go to school, but he did finish grammar school even if he had to walk about five miles a day to go to it.

I'd say there were probably about 15 - 20 acres of land to be explored. How exciting! Some woods, some pasture, and a big stony hill at the farther back of the land with things I thought would be fun to jump off of in the winter, if I had skis -- which I finally got and learned to do. A great accomplishment.

We finally got settled in, and we all found ourselves well oriented.

I haven't said anything about our upstairs in the house. There were two large bedrooms, a small room. I asked for it for a playroom and house for my dolls. Beyond that was a huge room covering all of the rest of the house--room for one or two beds, bureau, etc. storage and a playroom in the cold winter months. This was over the kitchen part so there was a hole in the floor near the chimney so the heat would be coming from the kitchen, also the good smells of cooking.

We found so many more things out doors near the house. There was a plum tree by the little house, and we decided to put our salad garden down there. On the other side and out of sight was to be for the two pigs we would get.

In front of the house was an apple tree which would have very early apples. We discovered when it produced they were so red with nice white juicy eating but wouldn't keep long. I believe it was called a winesap. Further on that side of the house were two pear trees, a sickle and a bartlett, about six apple trees, some early and some winter, like Mackintosh and bellflower.

Out back of the house was a large orchard with many, about 20, favorite, mostly winter keeping apples -- Baldwins, Northern Spys, greenings, and probably others I can't remember, but I could see where George and I could always pick up good ones that fell on the ground or climb up and get what we wanted. George found out that when he made himself a closet with a lock on it, and get them before I got around, so I'd have to climb the tree. Just another way of teasing me.

Near the back of the house we were going to plant raspberry and blackberry bushes. And so, at the end of each day we had a new list to plan on, and that was nice looking forward to. It was summer and fall for quite some time, but we had to think about winter.

It wasn't long after we got comfortably settled in when Mr. Cutter's family started asking if they could come to see their father. The first one was a widowed son, John, from New York, very nice and loaded with presents. I remember a Japanese doll for one. He was so glad to see his father. He had just lost his wife in childbirth, a little girl, and he had the good luck of having his sister, Margaret, say she would take her and bring her up.

Next came his other son, Winfield, wife and three children from New Jersey. My school had started, and the oldest boy wanted to go with me to see what it was like. He was nice but quite rough, city wise and bragging, so I never took him to school again. They didn't stay too long.

Mother was anxious to have her family too. We were near enough so that Uncle Julius and his wife and son could drive over from Augusta to spend the day. Uncle Julius, still trying to get me interested in music before I went to school, suggested I take some lessons on the organ. It was arranged and I had to walk to Gardiner to a music teacher, Mrs. Moody, on Church Hill, to take the lessons. That meant practice too. I was quite interested but not keen on so much practice.

Then Aunt Hedwig wanted to come perhaps for a weekend and trying to make Mother promise she could come for a week before Christmas so she could make clothes for my dolls, etc. She did make beautiful under clothes, all edged with lace and hemstitching on fine cotton cloth. Such a nice Santa!

I also had a cousin come from Sweden. Mother's older sister <sup>had a</sup> daughter. Her name was Agnes Petterson. She got a job in Gardiner as a nanny, so sometimes when off time, she visited her Aunt Emily. She loved to dance, so she met a nice man at one of the square dances in the Grange Hall and married him. So now both would come to the farm. They liked to play cards, whist and hearts. These were the two games popular then.

[Frank Boudway]

George kept pretty busy with his studies and also built up quite a trade with his repair work. He was so glad to get spending money.

We all joined the Randolph Methodist Church, and that was about all of our social life. The Epworth League did lots of nice group things. The ladies put on suppers, and later on George and I taught Sunday School and were in plays. It was nice to get acquainted with the Church people, and so many liked visiting on the farm. Mr. Cutter was always good company telling of Sherman's march to the sea and playing on his accordion, violin, and Jewsharp for all ages.

Mother always had the Ladies Aid group in for our Christmas tree which was set up by one of the windows in the kitchen living room part. Mr. Cutter would play any kind of music on any of his instruments to entertain, and Mother liked to sing some of her Swedish dance tunes and dance showing them the Schottish and the polka.

Before we had electricity we had candles on our tree, and I got too near one and caught fire--burned my nice newly made Christmas dress and found myself wrapped up in a rug. Fortunately, I didn't get burned badly. Another time my Guardian Angel was with me! This front part of the kitchen, as I've said, we used for a nice comfortable sitting room, with comfortable chairs and rockers and greeted anyone who came to our door right there. Some neighbors who lived farther on often stopped

to rest a bit, get warm, or get a cup of coffee. Mother always had the coffee pot on, a Swedish custom I think, and if she had just baked rolls or cake, she would send them home with a little package. We always enjoyed these little visits.

The Church doings were about my only social life. My Mother couldn't afford Girl Scouts or Campfire groups for me. However, she always kept Saturday afternoons open to take me to the movies. I think it cost 10 cents, in Gardiner. We did some good shopping then, so it was a big day each week.

I find I've neglected to tell you all about my busy summer life--some discovery, some fun, and some serious planting and weeding our salad garden which was down by George's work shop. We planted onions, radishes, beets, swisschard (a green), carrots, peas, lettuce, parsnips, tomatoes and cucumbers. Thinning the beets as they came up was quite a job, but just cooked as a green they were delicious. Sometimes I'd sneak a salt shaker down to the garden with me and snip a cucumber and a tomato (ripe) off and salt them and eat skin and all. Boy, they were so good, dirt and all! It was my job to keep it weeded and watered. Mother made and preserved for winter many of the salad garden produce. The garden for large vegetables was beyond the little house. In it were corn, pole beans, potatoes, pumpkins and squash, and men took care of that.

In the Spring, Summer and Fall again was the discovery of many grasses and flowers and a nice lawn for George and my friends to play croquet.

The first flowers of Spring were the Mayflowers, or botanically called Trailing Arbutus. They were pink and white small flowers and very fragrant, growing or trailing near the ground, nice for in a bouquet to take in the house, to a sick friend, or take to your school teacher. My teacher always was pleased with a bouquet.

We had blue violets and white violets, long stemmed white daisies with yellow centers, yellow dandelion blossoms with good eating leaves for greens, and fiddle head fern that grows in boggy places. The top looks like a fiddle head. You snip at about 3" down and cook it--very delicious. I think now they have that in the fresh or frozen foods.

Also the willow trees had a bloom called pussy willow. The little bud felt and looked like soft kitten fur. You could cut branches off and bring in to make flower arrangements. Another plant was the brass candle like top on the cat o'nine tails. That too you could cut and bring in until the candle like flower got too dry.

In the Fall we had Queen Anns lace, black-eyed susans (daisies), and goldenrod. In the woods Jack-in-the-pulpit and tea berries with minty leaves. I have just heard that people in Pennsylvania made teaberry ice cream using both berry and leaves and was told it was very good. There were also Lady's Slippers, All these nice flowers the Good Lord put here for us to enjoy without charge. Just the fun for finding them and enjoying them all in or out of the house.

I must tell you about my secret garden. After the lawn in front of my house and on the side were mowed, one day I was walking slowly by the roadside and spotted a four-leaf clover. I got down on my knees and soon discovered there were all kinds of four-leaf clovers, usually very hard to find and an omen of good luck. So I never told anyone about my discovery unless they were a "special friend". To keep four-leaf clovers one must press them when they first find them within book pages or such. I think every book I ever had has four-leaf clovers in it, even today I am sure I'll find some. Perhaps that's all a part of my "good luck".

During the winter months we had our school work. In the evenings we, George and I, would sit at the dining room table with our books chomping on a nice cold and juicy apple from the cellar. After studying we probably played a game of checkers or something he felt he could beat me at.

Outside on the weekends after a big snow and drifts, we would make a snowfort opposite each other and make up a pile of snowballs, and leave them to freeze so we could have a snowball fight after they had frozen. Lots of fun getting direct hits!!! I would challenge him on skis to see if he could jump off our mountains and still stand up. We also went on sleigh rides the Church arranged for us on the hills around us, and then enjoyed the oyster stew at the Church after. Very nice with our Church friends

We didn't expect to have Mr. Cutter's company in the winter months as they all loved coming to Maine in the summer. So Mother had most of our family and then, Uncle Julius, Aunt Emma and son Frederick, cousin Agnes and her husband Frank Boudway, and later on when they had their two girls Dorothy and Marion, sometimes I would bring them home from school on a Friday and they would spend the weekend. They loved to come to Auntie's house in the country, and we'd sleep three in a bed up in the nice warm upstairs, and in the day play up there.

George had about four nice church buddies who enjoyed coming out to the farm too, but he also liked to spend as much time as he could repairing things and making his spending money.

One winter when I was about six years old, Mr. Cutter's daughter, whom Mother and I had never heard about, wrote and asked if she could come up for awhile. She was in the hospital with tuberculosis, and her doctor didn't give her much hope of a cure but thought the good cold Maine air and good food would help her. So when he asked my Mother if she thought we could bring her to the house, of course my Mother said we'd do our best to care for her, and I was excited about having someone to care for. Her name was Etta.

She arrived by ambulance, and our doctor said she was critical, but we could make her comfortable. So the little space off of Mother's and my bedroom was her room where she could have all the attention and fresh air she needed. Mother and I



would take turns caring for her at night. She ate well, drank lots of our good milk, and Mother's good cooking, but her bad coughing spells would wear her out. Our doctor, Dr. Cobb, would look in on her often but didn't give us much hope. She was a very good patient though, and we gave her plenty of TLC which, along with being able to visit with her father, made her happy. We were sad when she passed away after about a month, and her body was sent back to New York for burial in the Cutter lot near Flushing, Long Island.

Mother and I were glad to get back into our bed and shut the windows in the other room. I always slept with Mother until we moved, and I was in high school. Then for the first time I had my own bedroom.

George, Mother and I were one family until George finished his elementary school. I think it was about 1915. He then hoped he could go somewhere to get trained in some kind of mechanics.

Mr. Cutter's daughter Margaret Sasse's husband had his own automobile garage business so he wrote to her and asked her if her husband could use George in his shop and train him in automobile mechanics. They said he could come and work for his board with them, so my brother left for Flushing, NY for a couple of years. During that time I did miss him but was happy to know he was happy learning a trade and enjoying the city and family he lived with. George was like Mother, very easy to get along with and very eager to learn.

There were six in the Sasse family-- mother and father, a daughter Ethel who was an RN, a sister Ruth who was a school teacher and would be married soon to an Edward Cook. The Cooks were a big family, and George met one of the girls who got a crush on him, and he palmed her off on me writing and getting acquainted. She intended to go into nurse's training when she finished high school, and encouraged me to come to New York and train at Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn too. So one year after she went in training, I entered too. Then there was a Sasse son, Frederick, and a boy Harold.

All of that family, except Mr. and Mrs. Sasse and Harold, came to Maine at one time or another to see their grandfather and fall in love with the State.

George came home, it seemed after about two years, and right away got a job in a shoe factory repairing sewing machines. There he met a nice girl, Mabel Weeks, and fell in love. He wanted to get married just before he was 19 years old, and Mother had to sign for him. It was a new beginning in his life.

After George came home, the Sasse's daughter Ethel came up to Maine for a visit. She loved it and we loved her. A few years later, she invited me down to Flushing after she married and had twins born, so I went down to meet the whole family and the new twins, Buddy and Marjorie. After that, the sister Ruth Cook came up with her husband and daughter Susan. After that Frederick came up one summer

and brought two college friends with him. Mr. Cutter wasn't too keen on that because they came up to have a ball and stayed out late at night and expected Mother and I to do all their laundry, etc. However, they were very nice men and I enjoyed them. When the grandson, Fred Sasse, graduated from college, he married a very nice girl from a well-to-do family and had a son, Leonard. Later he was elected as Bourrough President of Queens County, New York.

I forgot to tell you that his sister Ethel came to Maine on her honeymoon too. So we had another family to get acquainted with. However, we all loved Ethel. Later she had twins, a boy and a girl, named Buddy and Marjorie. She was divorced later, but for many years the three of them spent some summer time in Maine. I still correspond with Margie. She is married to the President of Otis Elevator Company and lives in Ontario and has three sons. Her husband recently retired, so now they spend winters on the East Coast of Florida.

Buddy, the boy twin, was an airplane pilot in world War II for Canada. He was shot down and captured in his first raid in Berlin and was a prisoner of war for two years, came home in rather poor health, but married and had a daughter. He died early playing Squash.

So life went on for all the years George was away, and then he married, as I said, and left home to live in Gardiner.

You have probably wondered about my playmates when I was on the farm. The only near neighbors had two boys, Clayton and Kenneth Robinson. They were usually my only playmates. They were of a very nice family, and I enjoyed being a tomboy with them on their farm. Clayton moved away after high school, but Kenneth stayed in Gardiner, married, had a daughter, and opened up a Nursing Home. It is still operating today and has an excellent rating.

Now I would like to add that I feel my many years growing up on the farm in Randolph was the happiest, most worthwhile learning how meaningful that environment and carefree it was. I wish every child could enjoy these young wonderful years. I thank the Good Lord for making it for me.

I neglected to tell you that when it came time for me to graduate from grammar school, my Uncle Julius was at the house and suggested that he and Mr. Cutter go with him to pick out a piano for a graduation present for me. He really thought I should continue my musical education, so they found one in Augusta, a Wellington, and I continued to take piano lessons from Mrs. Moody who had taught me on the organ. I did fairly well and was glad I could play for my friends, but I hated to practice, too many other things I'd rather do, so never did care to try to brag about my expertise. I always liked to play the popular music and did a pretty good job on that and on hymns and kept my piano with Mother all the time I was away in training. After Mother passed away I took it to Houlton, Maine with me and sold it there. I have been

happy knowing I pleased Uncle Julius and Mr. Cutter about the graduation gift from grammar school, and of their desire to further my education in music.

Back to my high school days. The first year was not a good one to get settled in as the old high school couldn't make room for us all, so we met at different times in a Community Hall, Grand Army Hall, and some in the old high school. In 1921 for two years we enjoyed the new high school. It was nice to be together and with all facilities more modern. All that did not change were our good old teachers.

I soon met a girlfriend there about my own age, and we enjoyed two fun years together. Her name was Helen Anderson. She too was from away but finished her two more years in Gardiner in high school. One day Helen Anderson's mother said to me, "You probably don't remember, but Helen saved your reputation when she and you were four years old. It was at the Christmas exercises in church. You were supposed to be in your night gown, come on stage with a lighted candle in your hand and say 'Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night.' As sometimes happens you were stubborn and cried and wouldn't go on, so my little girl, Helen, said she would do it for you, and she did. So that's why you have been friends all this time." I'm ashamed to say I was such a stubborn one, but I think this meeting of the two of us at this time again was quite a coincidence, and such a happy one.

At this point in 1919, I had turned 13 in May and we would be looking for a home in Gardiner, so I would be nearer to my high school. It wasn't easy to find a place to replace our farm, and we had to finally settle on a two-family house on the main street along the Kennebec River, in the residential part of the city, but just a short walk to downtown and my high school.

There was just a driveway into the yard, and a step off the sidewalk into our front door, so there would be no place for a garden or flowers. The rooms were adequate, and we were happy to have city water and central heat. I finally had a bedroom of my own after sleeping with Mother all those years in the country.

It isn't the only thing I had to get used to. We started looking for a bigger house to buy that would have some land with it. All of us sure missed the farm, and this house in Gardiner had no room for company. So we thought we'd go back to Randolph and look for something near the river and near to stores. Finally in July or August 1921 we found just what we wanted--a nice big house, large lawn that would need mowing, and in back of that land that was the width of the lot, a place for a garden. Just a salad garden, but that is so nice.

It, too, was a two-family house with a place for a tenant on the other side, also facing the street, so we were lucky to buy it. The house was directly across from the Narrow Gage "Kicking Critter" going to Togus. Now we would be able to enjoy riding on that again, going to Togus, to the concerts, visiting Aunt Hedwig in Chelsea and going to Uncle Julius' home. Mother and I sure were happy about that. Again we

could have central heat, running water and bath facilities, and my walk to high school was just across the bridge and up over Church Hill in Gardiner.

I made a good friend in high school who would be in my class and a new neighbor, Virginia McNamara. She was a good student, good humor, and we enjoyed all the four years together. She had a nice brother too, which was a nice companion to me at times.

I took the college course to have Latin as I had decided I was going to be a nurse and would need it, thinking too, if I changed my mind and college might be possible. I enjoyed designing clothes and I would have liked that as a profession. However, that was never to be.

I enjoyed high school and the four good friends I made in those four years--Virginia McNamara, Frances Manson, Nora Knox, and Frances Goldsmith. Nora was not a Gardiner resident but came down from Houlton to be with an uncle for her high school. I tell you that because after we graduated I lost track of her for years. She appeared and lived with me in Brooklyn for a few years.

Frances Manson's father had a drug store in Gardiner, and we were friends all through the years until she passed away in Wilmington, Delaware, being active in a large nursing home there.

My English teacher, Alice Richards, was from a very prominent family of Gardiner, a branch of the Gardiner family that settled Gardiner. She was an exceptional good and strict teacher. Not only that, but in the summer months the family had a camp on Cobboseecontee Lake where they welcomed students for more education along camping life and growth as good citizens. In my high school in 1922 we graduated a boy who was later elected Governor of the State, Charles Hildreth.

At this point I should like to tell you a little about our city of Gardiner and the opportunities for business. As I said before, it was part of a grant of land from England -- 1.5 million acres of land in Maine, to Dr. Sylvester, Gardiner's wealthy and prominent doctor in Boston, 1754. Gardiner was a part of land on the southside of the Kennebec River for 15 miles going north, from Bath to Skowhegan, and on the north side of the river to Richmond, Pittston, Randolph and Chelsea. He married and had nine children, died in 1786, left his estate to a four-year-old grandson -- Robert Hallowell. He changed his surname to Robert Hallowell Gardiner 1782-1864.

He hired the best lawyer to see to building dams to harness water power. In the Gardiner region, the Cobboseecontee stream ran into Gardiner's land, and he built up eight dams to harness the water power for running many mills, like grist mills, paper mills, saw mills, shoe factories, etc.

In 1734 he chartered the Gardiner Savings Bank and built, at his own expense, Christ Episcopal Church on Church Hill. Most all of the cities on the south side of the

Kennebec River are built on hills. In front of the church in 1824 he also built a commons, a park that is still in use and used for many things, like the traveling summer plays, and also the Gardiner Lyceum. He built a great stone mansion known as the Oaklands on a 125 acre lot overlooking the Kennebec River. In 1849 Gardiner became a city and began a six-year unparalleled growth. A book on these years has been written by Maine's author, Robert P. Tristan Coffin -- Capt. Abby and Capt. John.

Many branches of the Gardiner family and their wealth, being very philanthropic, made Gardiner into a nice bristling city in my time -- 1919. Much of the culture and literary part of Gardiner has been of the offspring of the Gardiner family. Laura Richards, daughter of Samuel Gridley Howe, founder of Perkins Home for the Blind, and Julia Ward Howe, who wrote "The Battle Hymn of the Republic". She lived in the yellow house on Dennis Street, near our house, when she married Henry Richards in 1878 and wrote 96 books, one titled "Captain January" that was made into two movies. Her daughter was Alice Richards who was my English teacher in high school.

A neighbor of theirs was Edwin Arlington Robinson, the poet. In my years 1919-1923, after a disastrous fire in 1834 and a disastrous flood in March 1898 which took the bridge out connecting Gardiner and Randolph, the town rebuilt itself, wealthy and philanthropic citizens into a bustling city in the 1900s.

We had the Kennebec Steamboat coming up the river from Boston three times a week, connecting in Boston for a boat to New York. Round trip fare was \$3.50, stateroom \$2, and meals 50 cents each. I took this once all the way from New York--a great way to come.

A small two-deck pleasure boat ran every day from Augusta, Hallowell and Gardiner to the many islands, and both at the mouth of the Kennebec River and ocean. This was a nice outing to take your guests on for the day. A very pretty ride. Now Gardiner had all kinds of industry--two paper mills, sawmills, shoe manufacturing, two factories, ice cutting in the winter, a big industry 55 ice houses on the Kennebec, some stored as much as 20,000 tons of ice, a hotel, lyceum, post office, Main Street, three drug stores, two dry goods stores, 5 and 10 cent stores, men's clothing, shoe stores, two movies and eight active churches, a good hospital and library built and designed by Henry Richards. Main Street was built up on both sides with nice three-story brick buildings for stores. Fishing boats at the wharf every day. Mr. Cutter liked our location as it was near enough for him to walk to the wharf and buy fresh fish. A trolley line was built from Gardiner to Augusta and Winthrop. Nice daily trip to an island on Lake Cobbosseecontee for a picnic and swim.

Three more noted men of Gardiner were Robert Hallowell Gardiner III, grandson of Robert Hallowell Gardiner. He inherited Oakland in 1886 and established World Conference on Faith and Order which is now the World Council of Churches. Another Gardiner, William Tudor, was elected Governor of Maine from 1929-1933.

An inventor, Richard Danforth and his brother Ogg invented the Danforth Anchor that was now manufactured in Gardiner. The invention is still standard equipment for the navies of the world.

I did graduate in the 1923 class and found that what I learned in my classes wasn't too conducive to earning a good wage. So I went back to clerking in Adams Department Store and sometimes in the office at Hazzard Shoe Factory, finally deciding I needed some secretarial courses--typing and shorthand. Folders had come to the house from Bay Path Institute in Springfield, Massachusetts--a school where I could work for my board and the tuition was not too high. Mr. Cutter said he would loan me the tuition for a year, so I elected to go there. I had enough money saved for my fare to Springfield and home if I didn't find it a good school.

I was lucky to be hired to take care of two children in a nice home, the Pundersons, and they treated me as one of the family. I had good rapore with the children and plenty of time to study and practice my typing in my own bedroom. Mr. Punderson's sister, Sally, was married to the artist Norman Rockwell and lived in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. The Pundersons would on some Sundays drive up to Stockbridge to see them and always took me with them. That part of Massachusetts is very beautiful, and the food at the Stockbridge Inn was super.

I wasn't quite finished with my year at Bay Path when I was stricken with a "red hot" appendix. Doctors in Springfield wanted an immediate operation, but I felt I should go home and not be a worry to my Mother, so I just packed up and left on the train, all by myself. I had to change trains in Barton, and I was okay, but as we neared Gardiner, Maine, I became very ill. It was a good thing I had notified my brother when my train was due. Fortunately an ambulance whisked me to the hospital.

Dr. Arthur Strout operated and afterwards he told me if he hadn't had a syringe of something (don't know what that was) that I wouldn't be alive today as I was practically gone when I landed there. However, being young he felt in time I would recover okay, so I was bound up to get by in the hospital for more than a week. This isn't done today, so I accumulated multiple adhesions which gave me trouble later, but now I realize that I had taken my life in my hands. Again my Lord was with me.

My Bay Path training was over, and I wondered if any one would hire me. I wasn't too fast in typing and my shorthand was questionable, but my Minister found me a job with a very prominent man in Augusta who had just bought a paper company in Portland and needed some extra help. I was honest with him, and I was assigned this work and told him I couldn't stay longer than summer as I was registered to go in training for a nurse in the Fall. So when summer vacation time came around, he asked me what I was going to do on vacation, and I told him I'd like to take my Mother to visit a niece of her late husband's, and that she had worked so hard and never had a vacation or visited this favorite niece of his. So when he paid me he wished me luck with my Mother and in training and gave me double pay for the two weeks' vacation. I really couldn't believe I could be so lucky, but on the other had I hand never had any

experience in traveling and wondered if I dared to take my Mother to Hyacinth, Virginia.

We went and I made a reservation in the Willard Hotel in Washington for two nights so I could have Mother see all the main sights in Washington and arrange for the overnight trip to Virginia on a boat on the Potomac River. All went okay. We sat at the Captain's table for dinner and Mother had never been on any trip since coming back from Sweden, and I had never been anywhere except on a trip to New York to see the Sasses and to Bay Path in Springfield, Massachusetts.

We landed safely in Hyacinth, Virginia the next morning and the Newsom family was at the dock to meet us. There was Mrs. Newsom, a daughter my age and three sons, one named Bailey Newsom who lived in Pennsylvania and owned and ran an Inn there. They had a farm and at that time the watermelons were ripe. They would feed them to the pigs. Well, I loved watermelon so I had to eat as much as a pig. I had one big belly ache. But they were good.

We visited until the boat returned for the trip back to Washington and left there for the trip back home by train. Such a memorable experience for both of us, although I can't imagine how I ever took a trip like this not knowing anything about traveling and with very little money.

My Mother had been so happy to at long last become acquainted with the family. Bailey visited us again in Maine, and Mother corresponded with Mrs. Newsom and her daughter for many years. They visited me in New York after I got through training.

After Mother and I got home from our trip to Virginia, it was getting near to the time I would have to start my hospital training. However, a lot of sadness transpired during that time. My Aunt Hedwig, Mother's older sister in Chelsea, passed away so there were funeral arrangements Mother had to be in on. [1923]

Soon after that, Mr. Cutter was taken ill with pneumonia and he did not recover, so some of his family came, and there was all that upset in getting his few things together and seeing Mr. Sanborn about the property. Mr. Sanborn convinced Mother that there was nothing to worry about on the property, so that was a relief for George and me too. However, I hated to leave my Mother all alone.

In fact, she wasn't all alone at that time because my brother and family were living in our apartment then, for a short time while they were negotiating to buy a place in Gardiner on Cherry Street. He would be leaving our house soon, but he wouldn't be far away. Mother's letters were always cheerful, but a while back, and we'd almost forgotten, Mother had accepted sponsoring a Swedish nephew, David Gross, her brother Magnus' son, and now he was coming to America.

He came before Mother had to break up her home, and George said he was sure he could use David in his business. He was opening a shop in Winslow, Maine. Well, David was very happy about this, and while he was working with George, he met some Swedish people. That had a daughter about his age, and it was an instant romance, helped out by her parents. Her father was a railroad man and got David a job on the railroad. There he was able to meet more Swedish people, and his pay was adequate. He soon married the daughter, Fanny. Now they have two children--Roy and Ralph, also grandchildren who I keep in touch with. Ralph's children are Eric and Andrea. Eric is an electrical engineer and Andrea is a pharmacist. I don't really know Roy's children but am fond of his wife, Jeannette.

Mother's letters to me were always cheerful, but several months later she wrote to me telling me she had been very lonely and had answered an ad in the paper for a position as housekeeper for a man in Litchfield and was already there and very content. She just loved the area and the houses. He apparently was very satisfied with her and wrote to me saying he was and wished she would marry him. But as she told him she wouldn't consider marrying anyone. Her children were her jewels and she would never share them. I told him I could not help him, so then he thought he would like to swap houses with her and move to Randolph. Evidently that suited Mother fine with the amount of money she would get. Again the transfer was all arranged with Mr. Sanborn. I never asked her what amount of money came to her, but she was so happy with her new home. She called it "Seventh Heaven".

After my father-in-law saw it, he too called it "Seventh Heaven" and carved a sign at her driveway entrance saying "Seventh Heaven", and as far as I know, it is still there. Now my brother George had to be Mother's helpmate in all her affairs.

On one visit by George and his wife, Bessie, they discovered Mother had a large lump in her chest. As usual, she didn't complain too much, but they knew she must see a doctor. When the doctor saw her he did all the examinations, etc., and said it needed immediate attention as it no doubt was cancer. So George and Bessie saw to it, and she was operated on, but someone would have to be at home to take care of her when she was discharged from the hospital. It was definitely a very large cancer growth and prognosis not too good. Well, of course, I surely wanted to come home, but I had to be back at a certain time or lose out on being graduated with my class. I arrived in time to see the operation which was very extensive. All tissue in front and back were removed to help the back area. Mother surprised us all and got along just fine. So I stayed as long as I could even getting a bit of seamstress work with Ethel Window in Augusta, helping to pay my way back to New York. Mother went back to George and Bessie's until she was ready to go home.

When I got back to the hospital, they put me in the nursery thinking, I suppose, it would be a cheerful place for me to be after all my anxiety with Mother.

Now I developed a bad chest cold. The x-rays showed TB, but the diagnosis was taken lightly. However, I was put to bed on the medical ward with a mixture of



many egg nogs, etc. My friend Laura Cook was head nurse on the floor at that time, so she was very attentive. One of the patients was admitted while I was there. He was a young man in his 20's for just rest and exams before having his tonsils out. He was to be married soon and wanted to have this over with since he had reoccurring sore throats. His name was Leroy Reeck. My friend "Cookie" as I called her, became very friendly with this young man and his family, even brought him in to introduce him to me, also his mother too. Well, I tell you all this because when they gave him the anesthetic for his tonsillectomy, his heart dilated and he died on the table. He had rheumatic fever at one time when he was a child, and it was never diagnosed. Everyone, doctors, family, friends were all terribly upset over this. His doctor told Cookie that his mother was near a nervous breakdown, and he wished some of the nurses could go out and call on her in our time off to see if we could help her.

It was quite a few days before I could go, but I promised I would go too when I could. I had a patient on the medical floor at the time, and she found out I was ill. She was on her honeymoon and came to see me and invited me out to the lake in New Jersey where they were staying for a few days until I could go back on duty. It seems someone always was coming to my rescue. So I was allowed to go out with them for a few days before going back on duty. The couple were the Robert Hudsons from New York, and we were friends for life after this. I was even in the delivery room and helped with their daughter's birth.

Cookie and I still remembered poor Mrs. Reeck and her sorrow. So as soon as I could, we both took our leaves and spent time keeping Mrs. Reeck busy, getting her mind off her troubles. Hence, another long time friendship. My training continued, and I loved every minute of it.

Before long I found myself having nausea spells, and while on duty one night I was vomiting and having a bad time when the night supervisor walked in on my floor and found me "upchucking". "What in the world are you doing Miss Bailey?" "Oh, I'm a bit nauseated." "You are vomiting fecal matter young lady, so you go right up to the infirmary." Oh no, not again. Well, the doctor diagnosed it right away as intestinal obstruction, and I needed immediate surgery. I had to notify someone in the family for permission to operate, so I called my brother not wanting to upset my Mother.

My Guardian Angel was with me again as the operation proved to be only adhesions. However, it was before antibiotics, and I was a very ill patient, developing pneumonia and phlebitis in both legs. I was critically ill for awhile but, as usual, bounced back. With the ever caring of fine doctors and interns, I got on my feet again. The Reeck family were very supportive and good to me too. When I could get out of bed and needed some sunshine, Donald, the boys young brother, came over and took me for short rides in the car, and one day to the movies--so, another new friend.

As soon as all of my drains, etc, were out, I went home for a short visit. I had begun to think I would never get through training, but at long last, with six months to

make up, I did graduate. I bounced back and finished my training right at the time our country suffered the great stock market crash of 1930. Fortunately, my Good Lord or Guardian Angel were looking after me because a former patient called me and offered me a job taking care of her for the winter in Florida. What a blessing! Regular pay so I could help my Mother financially. Before I was sure I could have the job, the patient's daughter phoned me and said her father wanted to talk to me before he decided how all arrangements would be made. So with fear and trembling, I went to New York and was ushered into this plush office in one of the big banks to the Vice President. Mr. Byrne introduced himself and sized me up and asked many questions, especially how I had reacted to Mrs. Byrne when I took care of her in the hospital. I said we had gotten along fine. He seemed surprised. He could not live with her and her tantrums, laughed and said he wanted me to be sure I could leave her at any time we had problems. He said if I told her I was needed at home and had to leave in April, she might say "You can walk home. I'm not paying your fare if you leave me." So I told her it was important to me to be home, and I had a contract with her husband that I would go home the way I came and her daughter would be notified and she would come to relieve me of my duties. I lived in St. Petersburg, Florida, with Mrs. Byrne.

I really had enjoyed taking care of her and being in Florida the first time in my life. The people we were renting from were very nice. They had two young sons, so on my days off they would offer to take me to the beach or sight seeing. So that was very nice, giving me a good break.

Arriving home I had no place to go but to my friends' home, the Reecks, but I didn't want to stay there because their son thought he was already my boy friend, which I didn't agree on but didn't want any fuss in the family as I had become very fond of his mother and father since their loss of their son. So I went back to work and found a nice apartment I could afford. I had Mother come down and stay with me. While she was there I caught scarlet fever from one of my patients who had the same bug, but hers was pneumonia.

In New York, one with a contagious disease must go to an isolation hospital. I called my doctor and told him I couldn't possibly go as my Mother was with me and didn't know her way around Brooklyn. He came out and saw me and made me promise I wouldn't let anyone in for so many days. So then I had to call on the Reecks' son to do shopping for me, but saying he wasn't allowed to come in. He was a good sport and helped us out, so I had to stay in until I stopped peeling some and getting the doctor's permission. And so, that soon worked out.

I can't remember how Mother got home, but I must have accompanied her home on the train and returned right away. Another upset in my hopefully normal life.

The apartment I was living in was more than I could afford, so in talking with a friend in the brown stone house where I once lived when I first got out of training, she said she would like to take an apartment with me to share everything. She was an artist who just worked on commission, but she assured me we'd be okay. So we

moved back to Flatbush section which was handy for both of us, subways and trolleys. We had lots of fun after finding a nice apartment. She took a large bedroom for her studio. I took the living room which we shared for entertaining, and got along fine.

One day an old friend from Houlton, Maine phoned that she was coming to Brooklyn to have an interview for a job as a secretary to a radiologist, and could she come and visit until she was sure of the job? Jean agreed, so Nora came for dinner. She got the job and never left us, sharing the living room with me. It was a bit crowded, but we all had a very harmonious household. Nora Knox was my friend in high school who came to Gardiner for just two years to be with an uncle. I hadn't heard from her since then. In fact, some friend told me she had passed away. So what a surprise when I heard her voice on the phone. Just like a voice from the dead.

Jean had a boyfriend, and Don Reeck now felt he was my boyfriend and called often, but I just took him for granted as one of my dear Reeck friends. When I had other boy dates, he seemed to be always waiting on my door step.

Finally, after many months of continued courtship, as he felt it was, he felt I must say "yes" to marrying him. It seemed I had known him for six long years, but never took him seriously. Now I must do something about it. It really wasn't that ardent love. I felt he was more like a brother, and his family were my absent family. I really loved them all. However, in the long run I knew he and I were right for each other. I finally said "yes". We were married in the Beverly Methodist Church in Flatbush, Brooklyn on April 3, 1936. This is the church where Norman Vincent Peale had his first pastorage. I felt pretty special when I walked down the aisle into a bank of forsythia at the altar, and two vases of orchids on either side of the pulpit.

I was late to the church, so when the wedding march started playing, Don dashed out of a side entrance with his best man trying to keep up with him. It was Don's fault I was late. He forgot to send the limousine back home for me, but he was afraid I had backed out.

It was a pretty wedding, so they say. Don had four of his Sunday School pals as ushers, and I had Angie Perry as my maid of honor and two bridesmaids -- my roommate, Jean Berkley, and nurse friend, Greta Beresford. A reception followed at Don's home, and we left there for a trip to the Smoky Mountains, North Carolina. This left Jean and Nora. Jean married her friend. He was a man with a 5 year old son. Nora went to live at the YWCA.

In April the beautiful dogwood and rhodadendrums were all in bloom--a beautiful time of year. We came back to our apartment which we had already rented and furnished in Flatbush, Brooklyn.

I was always busy with work, so I was even back on a call before my friends wanted to give us a welcome home party. As I walked into the house one evening, dead tired, the gang greeted me. Don was rested and full of pep. My Mother-in-law

had hung my drapes which made the apartment fully settled, and that was a nice surprise. So I tried to enter into the gala occasion.

I don't know if I told you that while in high school on some weekends I used to visit my cousin Fred Gross and his wife in Portland, Maine. This was Uncle Julius' son and a dear relative. His wife Alice was a nurse and worked for the American Can Company in their medical and first aid department. What a nice job, and I said how I would love having a job like that. Well, on a hot July day after I had been in the city New York to see some people off to Europe, I had come home tired out and glad I didn't have to go to work.

However, I wasn't home long when the telephone rang. One of our doctors asked me if I'd like a good job. I said I'd listen, but not for today. How would you like a job at the American Can Company in their First Aid Department? Could I be hearing of a wish I had made years ago when I wasn't even a nurse? How could I refuse! It was just like my Guardian Angel catching up with me. So I made an appointment for an interview next day and got the job. I was there five years working with an older nurse who finally became a precious friend.

I was happy as it continued while Don went into the service. He was bound to enlist, and I thought his going is a change and I'll be alone. But in the meantime, his Dad had a heart attack and was advised no climbing stairs. So that meant selling their house. Don and I decided that as he was going in the service, it would be nice if we could get a large duplex apartment together, which we did. I hated to leave our first home, but it all worked out beautifully, and Dad Reeck recovered and could return to work.

They had a Scottie dog and I had a cat, and I wondered how all that would work out. Well, what a pair they were. They just loved each other and exercised together, then fell asleep bound up in each other. All in all a happy family.

My job at the American Can Company was great, and I was there for five years. One day my coworker said to me, "I saw your father-in-law fall in the street yesterday. I thought you ought to know. We had moved into another apartment when Don had gotten out of the service. We both moved into the same house, but they were on the fifth floor and we were on the second floor.

Well it was sort of a shock to me about Don's Dad. However, I knew he was dragging one leg for a long time, but the doctors said they couldn't say what was causing it and would like to operate on him. I wasn't for that because I suspected some ailment that should have a second diagnoses. I had to tell Don, and we were most concerned.

That summer Don and I went to Maine to be with my Mother for a visit. In the town there was a store for sale, and Don said "Why don't we buy that for Dad and Mother", and Dad see the doctors here, be safer, and he would love working in the

store as he had always been a buyer in the Washington Street Wholesale Market in New York for years. Well, summer went by, and Don's Dad and Mother spent some time at their summer cottage in New Jersey.

In the meantime over Labor Day weekend, Don talked me into going up to Maine, buying the store, and he would go down to New Jersey and collect his Mother and Father. I did it with fear and trembling but had faith enough to believe it was the right thing for all of us. Since Don had insisted, I felt he could never say I took him away from his beloved Brooklyn. I bought the store, had to arrange with my Mother for moving in with her until the store was ready and came back hoping and praying it was the thing to do.

My father-in-law cried and said he wished he was going with us. Well, that sealed the bargain. We said we had done this for you Dad and knew Mom would agree that you must get off your feet with that bad leg, and we hope you will have a correct diagnosis.

I had heard of a doctor at Gardiner Hospital who was a very good diagnostician, so I made his acquaintance by going on a case there, and he was interested in Dad's symptoms and would come out to the house and make a diagnosis, hopefully. After much exam and questioning, his diagnosis was multiple sclerosis, but he wanted Mom to take him to Boston to a doctor and confirm his diagnosis before treating him. So it was done and our doctor was right.

When we told all our friends in Brooklyn and New Jersey what we were going to do they all thought we were crazy to give up everything there and move, but it was being done. So our friends got together--Mom and Dad Reeck, and Don's and mine, and they gave us a lovely farewell party at Tavern on the Green in Manhattan.

My friends Jean and Nora made most of these arrangements, and Jean, the artist, did all the personal little booklets for each and every one to write their farewells on, some trying to discourage us too. But we had made up our minds and knew it was the right thing. Another time I felt our Guardian Angel and Heavenly Father had told us it was the right and only thing to do. How often we find along life's way that our Heavenly Father is our best friend and advisor.

I have to backtrack and tell you about "Seventh Heaven" and my Mother's willingness to share with us. When we all moved in with Mother, she greeted us all as long lost friends and let us put all the furniture in the right places. We stored Mom Reeck's furniture in what we called the Carriage House and in two months took over her parlor (now used for our bedroom). It was surprising how well all my furniture, etc. fit and looked nice, and my living room furniture fit nicely in what she used as just a room where she greeted people and could serve them a cup of coffee in the winter. Adjacent was a dining room and in back of that a lovely sitting room with bay windows on all of one side overlooking the field and brook and road up to the house. We were the only house on this road, so now it was into September and I felt when everything

was going well at the store, I should be aware that Mother needed some winterizing done, so my brother George and I got together on the things we felt needed attention.

Off of the main house there was a nice large room Mother always called her summer kitchen. After a good inspection we saw it needed better foundation and tightening up for winter usage. He and I found large 6" x 6" timbers for bracing up the underpinning, redoing the whole side of the building here so we put in three new windows, redid the underpinning, new septic tanks, and added on a full bathroom with a water heater. It was still war time so we didn't have an easy time getting building supplies, but finally got it all together before the snow fell. Now, of course, the newly clapboarded side had to be painted.

The whole house on the outside was painted red, as were a lot of farm houses in that day. So first of all I decided it was my job to start scraping off all the paint to get ready for two nice white coats of paint in the springtime. I talked with another painter and he said to be sure I diluted the first coat of paint with kerosene so it would soak into all those old clapboards. This was my spring choice, not easy as one end of the house I had to work from a scaffold my brother built for me, the other end an extension ladder. However, I finally accomplished my two coats of paint job, plus taking out all the 17 windows and reputtying them. The old painter's advice was good, as I think my paint job is holding up today. It looks that way from the main road. Mother said she could hardly believe it was the old "Seventh Heaven". I just wish I could do these things today.

However, without my brother's help and know-how, I never could have become a plumber assistant or track down all the supplies that were needed. Those years, my brother was no longer a tease but a real teacher. He taught me so well that I was able to renovate another kitchen when we moved to Houlton, Maine. I learned, too, that when houses were built in those days, they were built to last from the best of lumber. So Mom Reeck, Don and I moved up to Maine leaving Dad with friends until he could come to join us. We moved into Mother's house, her "Seventh Heaven" as she called it.

From what our doctor here told me after I told him Dad's symptoms, he told us he thought it probably was the beginning of Multiple Sclerosis and he would soon be in need of a wheelchair. So on top of everything, Don found a man in Lewiston who told us he would build an elevator for Dad, so we had that done also. Most of this was new to us, but we felt now we were ready to greet Dad when he arrived. We had all of Mom and Dad's furniture moved down to the store and apartment, had curtains and drapes hung. Now it looked real homelike.

Upstairs there was a bath plus three rooms, a storage room for the elevator, a dining room off the kitchen, and separate from the store on the first floor. Also another small room that faced a lovely brook and trees in the back of the store. When Dad arrived, he was so happy the tears came, tears of joy, happy to be out of that rat race in New York.

Mom Reeck, Don and I set to work to clean, stock up the store and buy much needed supplies for both apartment and store. We did a lot of rewiring, papering, painting and buying, interviewing wholesalers we would buy from, installing gas pumps, another refrigerator for frozen foods, a meat slicer, etc., etc. Also had our well, which was in the cellar, examined for quality of water, which was very good.

Dad took to the buying and selling like a duck takes to water. Of course Donald had to do most of the buying which meant shopping in different nearby cities, like Gardiner, Lewiston and Augusta. Dad, being a good sport, tried to go up the stairs on his own, but a few weeks later, his brother from New York arrived with a wheelchair, so he was more than ready to try out the elevator which opened in the front and the starter was where he could reach it. He was in seventh heaven and so pleased with the people who came to shop. In fact, he was the first one up in the mornings to open the store and greet the children who came in to wait for the school bus.

Seeing a man working like Dad, in a wheelchair, the children couldn't get over how pleasant he was even with his handicap. However, he was surprised when they started buying candy at this hour. They told him they were hungry and said they had no breakfast, some saying Mother is too lazy to get up and fix their breakfast. Dad always had a good little story and cut out pictures to show them, so they all looked forward to their little visit in our store.

Don proved to be a good shopper, plus seeing salesmen and their wares, and we had very good service from the gas people. We were busy people every day, as we were the only store within three miles away and on the shores of a 10 mile lake where there were many campers from out of state and also camp complexes. We had a fine summer business. You soon learn about everyone's needs and preferences. After Donald got to know the people and some of their needs, he started working on things they could do to benefit the town, and he liked to make, hopefully, good suggestions like having a fire department and something for the children to participate in. So he got the information about starting a Scout troop, and for several months he always had to drive all the children to meetings as many parents weren't interested. Soon it seemed his efforts were a lost cause.

It didn't stop his enthusiasm for things though, so at the first town meeting he put in a warrant request for a list of things needed for some fire protection. He asked for money for five water pumps that could be carried on one's back for putting out forest fires which are a great hazard in Maine. He was asked "Who is going to carry 70 lbs on their back to fight fires?" Don replied "Uncle Sam never asks anyone if you will carry 70 lbs on your back. You just do it." After much arguments, pro and con, it was voted to investigate it and passed. So we got the fire pumps and plenty of volunteers. That year we helped put out several forest fires.

We ladies formed an auxiliary to make food for food sales and other earning things to help pay for more fire apparatus. The fire siren was placed in our store and it sure made people jump when it went off.

As it was Fall when we opened the store, in Maine it is getting chilly at that time, so we kept the wood burning stove in the back part of the store as many of the local old timers liked to sit around the store and chew the fat, and it was interesting having them.

One morning a man came in looking quite "down at the mouth" as people would say. He told about coming home that morning he was tired and hungry after a day's work in the woods. In the refrigerator there was what he thought was a roast and said to himself "I guess I'll have a piece of that." After he told his housekeeper what he had done, she was appalled and said "That was my cat. He died while you were away and I thought I'd roast it just for the oil." No wonder he was feeling sick after that.

Later we installed an oil furnace in the cellar, so no more chats around the stove. So many campers at the lake came to shop, and some were quite wealthy and liked to brag. One day this gentleman came in to shop, and before he made a purchase asked Dad if he could change a \$100 bill. Dad asked right back "How many do you have?" That just stopped his bragging. He just took Dad for a country bumpkin who didn't have much business or business sense. Here I want to say most everyone was pleasant to do business with.

We had some pet names for some -- like the lady who had to pinch all the bread before buying one and ask if it was fresh. We called her Mrs. Fresh as she must have known we bought fresh bread every day. Another lady came in and stood by the open faced cookie display and she would order one thin slice of meat for her husband's lunch box, and all the while opening the cookie display boxes and help herself. She was the "Cookie Monster".

However, when running a small country store, it is a great way to understand all kinds of people. We were always so busy with the store and the peoples needs, I have forgotten to tell you that my duties were usually more than twofold. I had Mother and her home problems to think about also, and sometimes people, having heard I was a registered nurse would ask me to work at night, so often I worked day and night.

It came to be May 19, 1947 sooner than I thought -- Mother's 80th birthday, and I had hoped I could have "open house" for her, invite her old church friends from Randolph and local people who would like to come. A new and already a dear friend who had just established a section of the Girl Scout Camp at Lake Cobbosseecontee said she would like to help us make goodies and serve. Also the Post Mistress, Ruth Horne, said she would help too. So we wound up with a goodly number. The Minister from Randolph, many from Mother's old circle, relatives from Waterville, Portland, plus my nephew's brother and wife. There were plenty of goodies, plus three birthday



cakes. It was a beautiful day and for my Mother a great day. She couldn't believe it would ever happen.

We did well in helping the volunteer firemen. Took sandwiches and coffee to them when they were needed to spend long hours fighting the wood fires. At our meetings we then talked about trying to raise money for a firehouse and a fire truck. One of our summer visitors from Pennsylvania said she had built a nice barn down at the side of the lake because she wanted to get a horse to ride, but her health wouldn't permit it. So she told the town if they could go and in some way cut it to bring it up into the village, she would give it to the town. Of course that needed land to put it on. We owned a small piece of land next to the store, and the post mistress owned a piece of adjoining land, so we both gave it to the town.

The volunteers cut the building in two and brought it up from the lakeside, and it made a great fire house, big enough for a fire truck. With everyone working for this needed building and fire truck, etc., we finally got a good working department, showing other small towns around that they could do the same. So more departments were formed, and people were so happy to have that protection and less fire insurance on their property. We were so thankful when the saw mill across from our store, that was located at the waterfall on the brook, caught fire. The fire, of course, got into the saw dust and lasted for days and had to be kept watered down. It was so hot the day of the fire, it partly baked potatoes we had in our storeroom across the road. We were lucky to have a tin roof on our storeroom, which fortunately never caught fire, but was scary for awhile.

Don still wanted to do something together with the kids and anyone interested, so he started a players group, and we got a group together studying plays we could put on in the Grange Halls and for their benefit, for groups around other towns nearby, or for the churches. Fortunately, we were able to get some good coaches, and we rehearsed anywhere we could, collected all the stage furnishings we needed for a play from different interested people, and drove it all with us when we put on the play. It was great fun and good training for quite a few young people, plus Don and I. We had some very good helpful advice from Miss Mabel Tarr, a retired stage actress who lived in Litchfield.

However, Don's friends started talking to him about his ability and why would he mess around with a little store when he could be earning a good salary somewhere, especially with the State. The time came when the State of Maine was advertising for workers for a new department, "Used and Sales Taxes" department for in the state and out of state. The boys encouraged Don to try out for it, and we all, Mom, Dad and I, encouraged him too. We said we could handle the store, but it would be a sacrifice. Well, he took the test and came in tenth after over 100 took the test, so they offered him a job.

We encouraged him to take it. So he trained some in Augusta, at the State House, but they wanted someone capable to go up into Aroostock County and

establish an office there, to find a building for an office, and two men to help him cover that part of the State. He found an office downtown in Houlton and traveled back and forth, some 180 miles, every weekend to help us at the store. He just loved his work and the beautiful country up in Aroostock, also the nice people.

Four years rolled around. One day I was at the store, the telephone rang, and it was the operator calling to say she thought something was wrong with my Mother as the phone was off the hook and nobody there. So off to the house. Mother was on the floor moaning. I lifted her onto the couch, called the doctor, and almost knew he'd say she had a broken hip. We put her to bed and I asked her next morning about going to the hospital as she had a broken hip. She surprised me and said "I guess I'll have to." She hated hospitals, but when the chips were down she was a good sport. She got along fine, but I never encouraged her to walk again. She healed and was without pain, so the wheelchair was the best solution, and she handled it like a veteran.

In the meantime, Don's father developed cancer of the bladder, which was inoperable. The doctors said it was like wild fire, and gave him only a few months to live. A good friend who summered at the lake, Lake Cobbosseecontee, volunteered to come in and help us at the store. A Mrs. Good who wintered in Gardiner was such a good friend and good help.

Soon after, my Mother had a stroke, and I had to bring her down to the store to take care of her and help in the store. Don was able to be transferred to the Lewiston territory which would be near us, and he could be home nights, so we all managed to keep the store open and take care of our loved ones. This is just another instance when our Guardian Angel was taking care of us.

A couple from New York visiting in the area and looking for a place to buy asked if we knew of any places. We sent them to several, but they came back disappointed. "Well", Don said, "you could buy this store." Well, their ears perked up and they asked if he really meant it. Of course he didn't, but it just slipped out. Then he told them it wouldn't be possible as Dad was so ill, and so was my Mother. But they inquired what about it if they didn't get well, and we wanted to sell. It was a thought, and we all talked it over. They insisted they put a deposit down and whenever we wanted to sell, just let them know and they would love to have it.

While my Mother and Dad were so ill, Don fell in a hole where they were building a new bridge across the brook to my Mother's house, and broke his leg, so I had him upstairs in a walking cast.

Mom Reeck was cleaning up one day upstairs, had two waste baskets of empty medicine bottles in her hands and got into the elevator to come downstairs. She thought the elevator had come all the way, she stepped off in mid-air, and crashed with all those medicine bottles, mostly broken around her. I'll never forget it. I was waiting on a customer and heard the crash, and upon seeing her sprawled eagle on

the storeroom floor with all this broken glass around her, I was sure she must have no less than broken bones. But after questioning her a lot and letting her catch her breath, I asked her if she had any bad pain. She assured me none, so I carefully got her on her feet with help and got her into the dining room on the couch there, and phoned the doctor who came eight miles out to examine her. Diagnosis -- no broken bones, but she was bruised up to her hips, swollen, and black and blue, with orders for elevation of legs and ice caps, and of course, complete bed rest.

Our doctor checked all the other patients while there and told me he thought Dad Reeck could go any time, so could my Mother, and Don was able to hobble with his cast. You would have to know Don's Mother to know who would recover as soon as possible.

Dad Reeck did pass away in less than a week, and we had to drive him to Staten Island, New York for burial after the funeral at our church in town. I want to add that all of the school children bought a lovely wreath for Dad Reeck's funeral with their own money.

A few weeks before all this bad news of Dad Reeck's condition, as I have said, my Mother had a stroke so I had to bring her down to the store. Now I had the care of two patients since Dad Reeck had passed away. Also, the doctor had put Don's leg in a walking cast so he was more helpful. Now I had to find a nursing home to take Mother for a few days, and it wasn't easy, but I finally found one in Gardiner eight miles away.

So off to New York with Don at the wheel, cast and all. After funeral services for Dad Reeck at the Church in Litchfield, we got home in three days and the phone was ringing when I opened the store door. The Nursing home couldn't keep Mother any longer. She was so noisy calling for me, so right away I had to decide where to bring her, to her own bed at home or at the store.

Finally, and I am most thankful, it was decided she should be at home, so in a few weeks, Mother too passed away very easily in her own bed at her beloved home, "Seventh Heaven". My Mother's four grandsons were pall bearers, and she was buried in Augusta in her brother's lot. I just want to say, after Mother's death, our doctor asked me to take care of a prominent lady in Augusta on night duty for a little while. I hated to refuse him as he had been so good to us, so I took it to get away from all my upsets. On about the third night, I fell asleep at the wheel driving to work, missed a gravel pit about two inches, hit a rock which threw me over in the car on a curve in the road. I wasn't hurt, but hurried to get out as I had just filled the tank with gas. When I called Don from a neighboring house, he was sure I was hurt but was amazed when he saw that the car was on its side in the road with only scratches and a sprung wheel. Another time my Savior was taking care of me!

It was near Thanksgiving time and we had promised the New York couple we would let them know about the store. Well, it took them no time to set a time to come

and take over. So we invited them to spend Thanksgiving with us and sit down and talk over all plans. It all worked out quickly and pleasantly. All that was left was my Mother's house and property to be broken up and sold. I just couldn't do too much about it at this time, as we all needed a breathing spell. So we all met at Mother's house -- Don's Mother, Don and I.

Don was ordered back to Houlton, and of course that would be permanent, we thought. So we had to look for a place for us to live. After several trips up there, we found a lovely big eight room, two story house on four street corners, atop a high hill overlooking the river. A pretty spot and a lovely old well built house, with two lots. Electricians who came to do some new wiring for us said there was enough lumber in that house to build two houses, nice plumbing and woodwork, birdseye flooring and hard pine finish all through the house.

Before going any further, I'd like to say, in spite of all our problems and business at the store, over the years "Seventh Heaven", and its occupants found time to entertain many friends. Mr. Cutters' granddaughter, Ethel Sasse, summers with her twins, Buddy and Margie and stayed at least three weeks. Cousin Agnes Marie came from Sweden and stayed a week or more. Aunt May Cook, as we called her, from Brooklyn came to visit and developed pneumonia and we had her bedded for most of the time.

My boss from the American Can Company, Margorie Daniels in Brooklyn, Ruth Whittmore, Portland's Girl Scout leader and her mother came several times.

Dad Reeck's grand nephew and family of three from New Jersey, Bob, Hilda Hudson, and Barbara (my God child) came often and stayed many times. Bailey Newsom from Pennsylvania, my roommate at Methodist Hospital, Polly Perkins - a week, Cookie and friend Anita visited from New York, besides all the families of Grosses and Boudways, my friend Jean's son Robert Detwiler, etc. It seems the beds were never empty. A happy household!

After we all had gotten well settled in Houlton, I remembered a promise I had made to my Mother that if and when I could, I would go to Sweden and meet some of my family over there. I wrote to my cousin Agnes Johnson and asked her for names and addresses of any and all relatives I should visit if it were ever possible for Donald and I to come to Sweden and meet these dear people. In reply, she sent me the names and addresses of 47 relatives, now only first and second cousins, so I approached Donald telling him what I dearly wished to do.

This, too, is another time my Good Lord was listening to us because we had his Mother to care for. Almost before we had a chance to discuss our plans with her, she said she would like to go back to New Jersey for a visit at her summer cottage on the Methodist Camp Grounds. She still had a lot of old friends there, especially one we called "Aunt May Drew". She wrote and said she would be there for the summer, so would love to have her come down. So now we told her about the trip we wanted to

take to Sweden. She seemed happy about that too, so we all started making plans for our summer.

It was easy for us to help Mom make her plans, but we had to find a tour director to move along with our plans. Fortunately, our good friends in Houlton whom we played bridge with, Dr. & Mrs. Bostrom, who were Swedish, and their daughter, a pianist, was an accompanist with a very prominent woman in Boston, Massachusetts who sang in their Church, and her father was a tour director. She approached him about our plans and he was so glad to give us an itinerary, but also said "While you are going, why not include some other countries in your plans?" So Don and I thought about where we might like to go and how we would like to travel.

Well, when all was said and done, a perfect plan was made out, including a short visit with each cousin, going both ways by ship--including getting off the Swedish ship, the Kungsholm, at Braverham, Germany, so we could visit Hamburg, Germany, then take a flight to Copenhagen, Denmark, then on to Sweden. After all our visits in Sweden, we could go on to Oslo, Norway, over to Edinburg, Scotland, and take a bus trip from there to London, and then by ship, the Bremman, to New York. Well, it all sounded like a dream come true. Also, we were able to afford it. It was really hard to believe that this man could do all those things for us, and after we understood, he routed us to all his favorite places he had stopped. What friends will do for friends!!

I still had to go back to Litchfield as I had rented Mother's house to friends who had two small children and now I find I had myself a big job to do -- papering and painting, etc., to get the house ready for sale. I now find anyone's small children can really wreck a place in a short time.

I engaged a Realtor and set a price. In the meantime, I sold "Seventh Heaven" to my first customer, a local family with children. I was so glad to see that those children would be able to grow up in such a happy house, enjoy the waterfall and the babbling brook. When friends of mine pass by now, they say the house paint job I did still looks good, and the "Seventh Heaven" sign is still at the roadside by the mailbox.

So on July 19, 1959, taking Mom to New York, we sailed on the SS Kungsholm for Sweden. Friends of Mom Reeck came up from New Jersey to pick Mom up and see us off. Plus, many of our old Brooklyn friends came, brought drinks, sandwiches, and goodies for a real big send-off party. It was a beautiful sunny day and such a happy occasion seeing so many of our friends.

We sailed past the Statue of Liberty at about 5 p.m., and I took a picture of her in all her glory, and have it enlarged in my Florida room here in Pinellas Park.

We chose to have only two table mates at our table on the ship and were quite disappointed finding out they were a Swedish couple who didn't speak English. When we arrived at our table we explained to our waiter about the language problems. He laughed and said "That's no problem. I speak five languages." So with the help of

dictionaries and his help, and a lot of laughs, we got along fine and enjoyed our companions very much. We played games together, danced together, and became good friends who invited us to their home in Trelleborg. We didn't get to their home but corresponded with them for quite some time. He was in the wholesale cheese business.

On the ship one day I met a girl I worked with at the American Can in Brooklyn. She was on her honeymoon with her Danish husband who was taking her home to meet his family. Then another honeymoon couple had their cabin next to ours, and she was taking him home to meet her parents. All six of us had a great time together for seven days.

On the eighth day we left the ship in Bräveham, Germany to go to Hamburg to see the ruins. The train to Hamburg was very late, and our dinner reservations at the hotel was served to us in the lobby where there was beautiful music played by an artist on a Grand piano. The table they set for us was no larger than a pie plate, and highly polished, so when Donald cut his steak, all the dishes went off. We were terribly embarrassed, our debut in Europe, but everyone was gracious and brought us another whole meal.

We only had one day in Hamburg and did get to see some of the war damage but were on schedule for a plane for Copenhagen, Denmark later that day. It was a very short flight, smooth and scenic. We were served a delicious meal of Danish cheese and home made pastry.

Our next stop was Hotel Europa in Copenhagen where we had a room on the 14th floor on the waterfront, but also having a good view of the city. Next day we visited the George Jensen silver factory and the Royal Porcelain factory where we watched the artists in individual booths hand painting the beautiful china. Then they showed us the kiln where the china was baked in the three processes.

The next day we did some shopping. The shops were small so it was educational and interesting seeing all the beautiful work in silver items and china.

Later we took a boat around the city, saw "The Little Mermaid" statue, and on to the palace grounds where we got off and toured that area and tried to get a smile out of the palace guards.

We went on to Tivoli Park. I think we paid 15 cents admission. I can't recall the acreage of the park, but it held a concert hall, numerous stage shows, open to all free, a band playing at times, 15 restaurants, and beautiful flower gardens everywhere. It would have been easy to spend a whole day there. Connected to this was the part especially for children. We sat and watched one show but didn't eat there as a place called "Seven Small Homes" had been recommended to us--very interesting decor and excellent food. To bed to pack again for Sweden. I'd say that Copenhagen was sort of a fairy city not to be missed.

## Trip to Sweden

July 29, 1959

Beautiful day and the day we would actually be in Sweden. We took the hydrofoil from Copenhagen to Malmo and were met at the dock by cousins Hugo and Ingeborg from Landskrona and Ingeborg's sister, Karen Johnson, from Svedola. They greeted us with a bouquet of flowers and even a corsage for Donald. Then they took us to a restaurant for coffee.

After Magnus Gross (Magnus is a jeweler) drove us to their home in Landskrona, the two lady cousins were my Mother's brother Magnus' daughters. At their home the dining room table was all set for a dinner which sparkled with three crystal glasses at each place, beautiful baked centerpiece called "spita cokka" made with 15 egg whites they said, beautiful linen table cloth with fancy folded napkins, and nice china place settings. I think the glasses were oresfors, a glass made in Sweden. Don seeing all the glasses said to me "I guess they drink more than water here."

After all the delicious food was eaten, a daughter's family came. The mother and Gustav, and twins, and Margretta entertained us with Swedish songs and dances. Afterwards, we took a walk around Landskrona. There was a lot of industry, ship building, a sugar refinery, and a shortening factory. There were lovely flowers everywhere, and Hugo had a nice garden and summer house about 10 minutes walk from his house. Hugo Gross is a jeweler.

We played Canasta in the evening. Next day we went for a walk in the lovely park and enjoyed another delicious dinner of fried fish (fink) with Hollandaise sauce and fresh vegetables from Magnus' garden-- also strawberries. Karen called on the phone and invited us to come to Svedola, so next day Hugo drove us to Svedola. One of the twin girls hid her shoes so she couldn't go home but went to Svedola with us.

July 30

We arrived for dinner, they are always eating in Sweden, and we enjoyed meeting Joel, Karen's husband. Neither one spoke very good English, and Don and I had to use our dictionary for Swedish, so we had lots of laughs trying to be understood. Such a sweet couple, though. Their daughter, Ulla Riese, phoned from Stockholm and wanted us to be sure to visit her when we got to Stockholm.

So after enjoying a couple of days in Svedola, getting a bit rested up and my hair done, the couple we met on the Kungsholm, Inga and Ralph, called from Malimo and said they would pick us up and take us to Malimo. So we had a bit of sightseeing in that part of the lovely countryside. In Malimo we stayed at the Kramer Hotel, had dinner and cocktails at the King's garden, a colorful night club. There when we ate,

they put an American flag on our table which I thought was so nice and friendly. A pretty small city.

August 3

To bed at 2 a.m. and up at 6 a.m. to get a train to Goteborg--a five hour ride. Had a 16 year old German girl with us in our compartment who spoke good English and was so interesting. Then a Dane joined us, so we had a pleasant 4-way conversation. Cousin Carl, son of Mother's brother Carl, his wife Agnes and son Lennard, met us in Goteborg and drove us to our hotel. After lunch we all drove to Mastrand to visit cousin Joseph's widow's home and met all the Petterson cousins, children of Mother's oldest sister.

They showed us around Norstrand, an island across the channel from Denmark where we viewed an old fort where the Danes and Swedes fought to protect their fishing rights. We had a great smorgasbord dinner there, out of doors, with about 20 people. Then my cousin Carl drove us on a sightseeing trip up great heights to see Goteborg at night and back to our hotel.

Next day cousin Carl took us on a boat trip around the city and harbor. Also to his wife's flower shop. I haven't told you yet, but cousin Carl was a florist and had a large nursery. He also took us to the city museum and more sightseeing of modern housing. We had dinner at Carl and Agnes's country home in Askin, a wonderful meal again, and met Agnes's sister and brother, and Carl's sister, Elsa.

Goteborg is more modern and has apartment windows all having flower boxes. They presented us with a nice book on Sweden. To bed at 2 a.m. again.

August 4

Train ride from Goteborg to Stockholm 6 a.m. to 12 noon. Cousin Agnes Johnson met us and took us to the Hotel Regina, then to Agnes's for lunch. She had made two kinds of cake and four kinds of cookies which delighted Donald. Agnes' older sister Marie lives with her and is not too well. We remembered her when she came to visit me when I was in training, and she had failed so much. It was sad to see.

After a much needed nap at the hotel, we found a real nice place, Riches, for dinner with a musician at the piano. We did a little walking around the city, so beautiful and clean, and found we would have a busy schedule in Stockholm.

Our hotel Regina was old but very handy to everything, and there were colorful flowers everywhere.



August 5

In the morning we took a walk and shopped in Stockholm's large department store -- 'Nike', bought an Orofors glass vase, pretty but heavy so I won't buy any more glasses. At 1 p.m. went to Sollentuna to my cousin Emily Blomberg's birthday party. Met so many cousins, 23 in all, for lunch and supper. Don enjoyed two young girls teaching them English.

Their home was in Sollentuna, a suburb of Goteborg off Stockholm and had nice fruit trees and berries. We enjoyed coffee in the garden. A wonderful happy group of cousins, young and old, names like Emily, Hilda, Beda, Fritz, Ulla and Wolf. Arrived back at our hotel at 2 a.m..

August 6

Next day we met Agnes and took a boat trip to Waxlund Island, and cousins Ulla and Thorborn Riese came in a boat taxi and took us to their summer island home in the Archipelago. Their house was 200 years old. It was once the Burgomaster's house. There were porcelain stoves in every room, floor to ceiling which must never be removed to keep the home's antiquity in tact. They had the boat taxi take us all around this beautiful setting. Another beautiful day.

August 7

Another beautiful day. We certainly were in luck with the weather. We went to City Hall and met another cousin, Stig Engstrom, who has his office there, and he is the buyer of all supplies going to the hospitals in Stockholm, so is a privileged character and able to take us way up into the tower to take pictures and into the hall used to entertain honored guests to Stockholm, a room called the "Gold Room" -- all the walls are covered with real gold brick-like pieces. Now I understand one has to be accompanied with a special police to go there because people could chip off pieces of the gold. After that we met another relative for a ride around the harbor. After that a walk through the old city of Stockholm--very quaint-- streets only three feet wide, quaint little shops where we could enjoy hours of browsing and shopping. The old city is 700 years old.

Stig Engstrom met us and took us for a 40 minute train ride to Ronninge. He and his wife Brigit, who is my cousin, have a lovely home overlooking a lake. As we found in most Swedish homes we visited, a dinner with beautiful settings, etc, and delicious food. Their kitchen had all steel appliances.

The end of another perfect day. Years later this couple visited us in Houlton, Maine. He was sent to America to take in Worlds Fairs in Canada and to visit several hospitals and to bring reports back to Sweden.

August 8

On Saturday we visited more of the city of Stockholm. There was a wonderful market, underground, with all kinds of foods, flowers, live eels and cray fish swimming around in pools. Later in the afternoon we took a bus to Drottningham Castle, summer home of the king and queen, and there visited a 17th century theatre. On our bus we met a recently retired doctor and his wife. He had just retired from my hospital in Brooklyn, New York, now living out West. A small world! So we had a lot of reminiscing to do. It was there they had a setting of the Versi Gardens of Paris. Their own theatre was very quaint and interesting.

Cousin Arne Justav phoned and invited us to cocktails and then drove us to the theatre, owned by the Rieses, for a box seat to see "South Pacific". We had dinner after. Another late night.

August 9

Next day in the morning we walked to Mares and we all went to Skansan, the beautiful park of Stockholm. It was Swedish American Day, and we saw and listened to Carl Sandburg, and around the Maypole saw a lot of Swedish folk dancers and visited old Swedish homes.

Met an interesting lady from Los Angeles. In the evening we went to Berns, a night club with floor show, fine food and drinks. Back to the hotel and packed ready to get an early train at 8:50 a.m. to go to Karlstad. Arne, Fritz, Hilda, Dagmar and Arne were at the station waiting to see us off. Each one had a gift for us. We were ushered into a first class compartment. Met the lady from California and had dinner with her. She was so surprised at our compartment as she just had an ordinary seat. The conductor, too, was amazed when he looked at our ticket. He said this is a mistake. After he came back to us, saying if they were stupid enough to put us in this compartment he would let us stay there. Lucky us!

We would be leaving Sweden and all our loved ones, only stopping in Karlstad one night. Our tour director had stopped there many times, and he said we shouldn't miss it. I believe it is where the King of Sweden comes sometimes for some recreation. Donald was quite annoyed to have to drag all our luggage off the train just for one night, but he was glad we did because it was a beautiful little town, the birth place of Zelma Lagerloff, where a fountain in the park was in honor of her, a river running through the town to the sea, carrying logs to be shipped by sea some place. Our room was spacious, a king-size bed with pillows having silk covers, a balcony seating three or four overlooking the river, and downstairs a casino, dining room and beautiful patio.

We were very tired after all our late hours with our families. Right away Don took off all his clothes but his shorts and stretched out on the bed. As he was about to doze, a maid came in carrying a vase of a dozen red roses. He was surprised and

embarrassed, but made believe he was asleep. We wondered why we got such attention. However, it was nice. After a bit of rest we sat on the balcony enjoying the boats on the river dragging the logs.

After resting a bit, we walked and found the lovely park and made arrangements the next morning to take a boat on the river going out into the ocean. To our surprise, the Captain of our boat was a man who spends some of his year in Boothbay, Maine, carrying tourists around our coast. So we felt right at home with him. A very scenic part of the country. Our dinner that night was really super, and we enjoyed a bit of time in the casino before going to bed.

Next day in the evening, we left for Oslo, Norway by train. There we stayed at Hotel Carleton, small room but nice bath. After dinner we walked to the waterfront and saw the Windjammer Ship, Christian Radish and saw City Hall facing the fjord with lovely flowers and fountains.

August 10, 1959

Our first rainy day. However, we had a nice breakfast, real orange juice, bacon and eggs, buns and coffee. At 10:30 a.m. we started a tour of Oslo visiting the once a year ski jump called Halmon Kill -- Bakkin. Looking down from the top you wondered how anyone would care to jump from there. There were special box seats all along the side where dignitary and sovereign sat. This was for international prizes once a year.

Next we went to the Viking Ship Museum to see the Kon-Tiki raft and Admundsum Ship, then to an old stave church built in 1100, also a farm home of that area. Off to Vigeland Park to see the statuary carved by Vigeland depicting life in the womb and in family until death. The latter being in a beautiful monolith depicting the end of life and family. All this statuary was unbelievably beautiful. We then transferred to a boat to view the harbor, but it was raining so hard the visibility was zero. We passed Sonja Henie's home but were unable to see it. The guide said that it has her own motion picture studio in her home.

Back to the hotel for a nice steak dinner, a long walk, and packing again for our tour by bus on the Norwegian Fjord. Our driver is Kara, and we have 13 passengers in the bus. Today was a short trip stopping for the night at Gjorik. Lovely hotel, indoor pool, steam and massage room, super food. Our hostess is a charming lady who was a flyer in the last war.

August 11

We were off at 8 a.m. with all our group from our bus tour. Beautiful scenery every way one looked. Storehouses on the hillside called staburetts, so picturesque, long racks of hay drying everywhere. We stopped for a snack at Fargerds, in an old 17th century home and entertained by a longacher, old music piece and fiddle music.

Next stop at Lamadal, very good soup and fresh salmon. After seeing the salmon jumping up the water falls, our appetites were whetted for it.

On again to visit a stone church built in 1300, still standing on its original site. Only 27 of these churches were left in Norway. After putting the bus on two ferry rides, we stopped overnight at Balstrand where the Kaiser Wilhem often stopped on Sognerfjord and built himself a statue of himself in front of the hotel on the fjord facing a high glacier in back of the hotel. This is the place where the Kings of Norway fish and stay.

August 12

Still on the fjord tour landing back in Bergen. Magnificent scenery and waterfalls all the way. Saw the small and colorful fjord ponica, a saeter boy who tends the goats on top of the mountains in summer. Stopped and picked heather from a mountain top, but disappointed not seeing any reindeer. Stopped for delicious smorgasbord at Voss. The hairpin curves on this lap of the trip are something, and we were relieved to have a very skilled driver and courier. We parted with most of our companions at the Terminns Hotel in Bergen.

August 13 - Sunday in Bergen

Slept late as that fjord was a bit trying and exhausting. Had a smorgasbord for breakfast. Went for a walk around Bergen, a lovely spot surrounded by seven mountains on the Hardanger fjord.

August 14

Boarded the S. S. Venus bound for Newcastle, England later that day. The harbor at Bergen is very interesting. They had a fish market there, and those beautiful cuts of fish made your mouth water. We visited the Hessianic Museums and an old home of the Hessians -- very dark and dismal and rather gruesome. These German merchants must have been tarts. Bought a few gifts in Bergen. At 10 p.m. we took off on the Venus. Have a very tiny stateroom, but lounge is very comfortable. Nice evening to sit out on the deck until after midnight.

August 15

Nice day. Beautiful smorgasbord breakfast in first class dining room. Sat on deck for awhile. The English people on board not very friendly. Nice dinner. A little sea sick.

Forgot to say, while in Bergen we visited Edward Greig's home, a beautiful spot on the Hardanger Fjord. One more stop at Stravanger where we docked for awhile. They had nice gifts and fruits on the dock. It seemed like a nice little fishing village, homes facing the fjord had window boxes with flowers in all their windows.

On with our S. S. Venus voyage, and we docked at Newcastle and took a train to Edinburgh. There were three Scottish maidens in our compartment, and we all had a very good game of Rummy, plus hearing all about their adventures.

August 19

Our hotel, Royal, was very nice facing the main street and overlooking the park and old historic homes of Edinburgh. Got settled and took a bus tour of the city. A very amusing courier. We visited the old fortress, oldest church in Scotland, saw the crown jewels, St. Giles Cathedral, and Holyrood Castle.

Nice dinner and went for a long walk down Princess Street. I wish we had a few days here -- much ado about the royal tattoo event next week.

August 20 - Edinburgh and the Trossacks

Left Edinburgh at 9 a.m. Saw Stirling Castle where Queen Mary was born, saw Lock Katrina and Lock Lochmond. A busy day's drive, country is very green, no wild flowers except patches of heather and acres of ferns, winding roads, and lots of traffic. Saw mounds of bing or binn, slag from slate mines. Saw Castle where Rudolph Hess was held during World War II. Saw beautiful bridge across the River Firth. A very long day. Had dinner at hotel and watched dancing in the park. We have decided the Scotch people aren't the best cooks. No seasoning in foods.

August 21

Left Edinburgh on bus to London. Countryside hilly and pretty. Our bus is full. Stopped Keswick for lunch and ate with two girls from Australia. Stayed at Baxton, the Palace Hotel, very high class, good food. Met a nice couple from Atlanta, Georgia. On the registry were names like Dean Acheson, Doug Fairbanks, Jr. We had room Mr. Gore, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Great Britain, slept in.

This is a mineral springs spa. Had a nice walk in the evening, very nice shops. In the morning we visited the famous Gretna Green.

A very long and tiring trip. Lunch at WarWick. Stopped at Stratford on Avon, visited Shakespeare's home and got a glimpse of the Shakespeare Summer Theatre on the Avon River. Stopped in Litchfield and visited a cathedral and took pictures of the beautiful park. Stopped at Oxford but didn't get a chance to go into any of the 24 colleges. Passed Windsor Castle -- very beautiful -- and stayed at Hotel North Royal.

August 22 -- Sunny and Hot

Had breakfast in our room. Took sightseeing trip to Windsor Castle, Eton and Hampton. Walked to Picadilly Circle and had a wonderful dinner at the Trocadaro. End of a perfect day.

August 23

Morning and evening tours of London, Westminster Abby, Big Ben, Park Cathedral, and Buckingham Palace, and saw changing of the guard. Saw the Tower of London, the East side where all big business is carried on. London is so spread out, bomb damage in evidence almost everywhere. Ate at a Chinese restaurant and went to a show after -- "Blue Magic" -- a review at the Prince of Wales Theatre. Interesting audience, laughed at the things we wouldn't laugh at. English humor.

August 24

Went shopping. All set to say goodbye to Europe on tomorrow.

August 25

Enroute to New York aboard the SS Brennan. Beautiful day. Never saw any of the English rain. Left hotel in taxi with a Mrs. Kinney of Braintree, Massachusetts. Had a good seat on train to South Hampton and boarded the ship at 2:30 p.m. Had 4 o'clock coffee and got deck chairs on top deck, enjoying the sunshine. To the movie to see "Syanora", and after ship docked at Charboy, France we watched the people board. Our table mates are Mrs. King and Mrs. Kramer from New Jersey.

So glad we have our deck chairs on the sundeck. Good food, but not as good as the Kungsholm. Played shuffle board. In evening met a nice family from California. Still keep in touch with them. Had a few drinks and danced. A very nice day.

August 26

Cloudy and rain. No day for deck chairs. Had new table mates for breakfast -- a college professor, his wife and daughter named Kendra from California. Played bridge with them all morning. In the evening attended bridge tournament. Don was asked to organize it, got the impression she didn't know bridge. After dressing for dinner, went to the movies to see "Private Lives". Saw flying fish today.

August 27

Up on deck for a game of shuffleboard. Col. Matthew and I won, then a bridge game and a lesson for the Matthews daughter, Kendra.

Nice chicken dinner and then up to lounge for dancing and drinks and a trip to the brunch with the Matthews, plus four laps around the deck. A nice but uneventful day.

August 28 - Foggy

Didn't go to church as the going was pretty rough. I had a bit of seasickness, but was okay in time for the Captain's Dinner. Dressed for it, but no Captain. A few games of bridge and an early "Good Night".

August 29 - Nice day but hot and humid

Played shuffle board but shower came up. Off to the cabin to pack. What a job! Took Don and I all morning. Nice German lunch -- sauerbraten and cheese cake. Foggy so we played bridge and had one last drink together with the Matthews.

Mom and Aunt May met us in our car and we were on our way to Houlton, Maine. We were exhausted after our long wonderful trip, and I was so glad we both enjoyed it, and my promise to my Mother was satisfied. Now I hope more of my family some day can enjoy going to visit their roots.

We picked up our good life in Houlton, and Don was told he could make up the days owed the State, so all was well.

We enjoyed our new friends in Houlton, and I think Mom Reeck is happier than she had ever been, having made so many friends in the church and friends to play bridge with. However, when another vacation time rolls around, we felt we should all do something together. So we started asking friends about Florida vacations. We wrote to St. Petersburg about a motel for 2-3 weeks. A friend from Houlton had bought a house in St. Pete and lived down there in the summers, and they gave us a list of places we inquired about. We finally called a motel off the St. Pete Beach on the water way called Silver Blade, with two bedrooms, living room, kitchen and bath, so we rented it. There was a nice pool on the water way and only about a dozen renters. We took it and just loved it there and went there for several years, even having some of my friends coming to rent to -- my old friend Cookie, the nurse, and her roommate in training Ann, for a couple of years.

We played lots of golf with our friends from Houlton who had told us about the place. Lots of bridge with them and their friends, so we never lacked for entertainment and liked most of the people who picked up rents in our condo. This went on for many years. However, the first time when it came time to go home, Mom Reeck wanted to stay down a while longer with her friend, Aunt May Drews from New Jersey. I'm really upset about this because Mom Reeck was so susceptible to injuries of some sort, but she begged to stay and we did let her knowing it probably would be a mistake.

Don and I had no sooner gotten home when the phone started ringing, and it was Aunt May Drews in tears. She said she and Mom were going out for dinner and taking a short cut between buildings where the street was made up of simple bricks, called Augusta Snider, when Mom tripped and fell. She hit a pipe going into a hotel and hit her head on it, breaking her glasses and it cut one eye by the glass end of the eye socket, broke both arms, one at the shoulder and the other in the elbow, and was in a bad state of shock. Fortunately, she got wonderful doctors at Bay Front Hospital who got her eye back in position and both fractures back in place. It all seemed quite impossible, but she signed herself out to come home in this condition--one arm in a sling and the other in a cast, with her face still very swollen and black. This is the way we met her at the Boston airport after four of the crew took her off the plane on a stretcher. Luckily we had a front seat in our car we could tilt back like a stretcher, and we got her to Portsmouth, Maine the first night, then home the next day. This meant putting her upstairs to bed. So for a few weeks, I had the job of nurse, cook, and bottle washer. It was pretty strenuous, so it left me with high blood pressure and many trips to the doctors and lots of medicine. However, Mom Reeck recovered well, and then it was my turn to collapse.

One night about 1 a.m. I had a heart attack and was put on oxygen and medication for a while in the hospital in Houlton. When I recovered, I found I had no hearing in my right ear, so I went to a specialist in Bangor, and after a full morning of testing, he said "You have no hearing. You have had a stroke so don't ever let anyone sell you a hearing aid. It would be of no use." So that was that for me, my first sign of "old age", I presume!! Plus a coronary!

I am finding that so many times I have a lapse of memory and find I've missed some nice trip we took while we lived in Houlton.

In 1965 Mom and I were back to normal, and that summer Donald said he would love to take a summer vacation that year. So right away Mom Reeck said she would like to go out to Anaheim, California, to visit Aunt May Cook who had moved there from Brooklyn after she lost her husband and to be near her only son who had married and lived there. So Donald suggested in his vacation time we could drive out. It would be a nice change for us all.

While we were making plans one of our neighbors asked us if she could ride with us to Bakers Field where one of her brothers would pick her up and she could have a visit with the two brothers out there and she would meet us there when we were ready to go home. Being good neighbors, we agreed to do it. So in May we started out for a long and scenic ride. Since we lived right across the border of Canada, we took the Queens Highway in Canada to Oakville, Ontario where we stopped to visit our dear Margie Blummenheur. She was so surprised and pleased to see us, and we hadn't been in touch since she married and now she had three sons. Her husband was away, but we met her youngest son about seven years old. We had such a great time reminiscing. She later told us when her husband came home her



little son told him that there was a man here hugging and kissing Momma. It's a good thing her husband knew that we had known Margie since she was a baby.

From there we drove to Detroit, Michigan, on through Indiana and Missouri. All new country to us, but we found good lodging. On to Kansas where the traffic in lots of this state was no trouble -- straight roads, no sign of houses for miles, just mail boxes. It seemed all the ranches set way back from the roads, so it was easy driving.

Then on to Colorado where we got into the mountains. On one road we ran into two large herds of sheep on the road with their shepherds and dogs. We asked how we could get through. The shepherds laughed and said "Drive right along. The dogs will see that the sheep get out of your way." Amazing, but they did, and I have a nice picture of that now in my Florida room.

From Colorado we drove through Arizona, Indian territory. Found lots of interesting shops selling lovely Indian jewelry and crafts. Then on to the Grand Canyon where we spent a night. From our balcony I saw the most beautiful sunset I had ever seen. We drove all along the side of the canyon looking down at the great expanse and depth, seeing people riding the mules on those scary narrow roads, if you could call them that. But they are very colorful and majestic.

Then on through Death Valley desert, which was so vast and lonely, but here and there groups of desert flowers blooming. One was anxious to get out of there wondering what we would do if we ran out of gas. However, we made it okay, and there WAS a gas station.

We drove into high hills in California to Bakersfield where we left our neighbor. Then on to Anaheim, Aunt May's new home. It was high in the mountain area, and we could look down on the bright lights of Los Angeles at night. Aunt May had found a beautiful spot. There was a beautiful museum nearby where we enjoyed seeing beautiful art works, one especially. We were happy to see Pinky Lee and Blue Boy, the original painting, where we sat on a bench feasting our eyes on it under strong lights. I have the duplicate painting, done in needlepoint, a house gift from a dear friend when we moved to Florida.

We left Mom Reeck with Aunt May while we drove to San Luis Abispo to visit the friends we had met on the ship returning from Sweden, the college professor, his wife and daughter. While there they took us up to San Simion to see the farm where Randolph Hearst had built his live-in girlfriend, actress Marion Davies, a vast complex on the very top of this hill, a spacious home, a theatre with upholstered seats, an outdoor swimming pool surrounded by unusual lighting and high wrought iron decor all around it. It was said he imported it all from Europe.

We then spent a night with the professor and family and tasted our first California crabs. They were good, but not as good as Maine lobster.

We were anxious to drive on up the coast of California to Carmel and Monterey. The coast was more bleak and less rocky than our Maine coast but had its own windswept scenery. Saw a golf club with a green right out in the ocean and many seals on rocks a ways out. We wanted to go on and see the National Redwoods forest, the Muir Woods, where all the so very high and huge redwoods were. It was so hard to imagine how many years it had taken them to grow.

Then we drove down to San Francisco to visit the nice family we had enjoyed on the Bremen coming back from Sweden in 1959. They were so happy to see us, and we enjoyed seeing the house Mr. Schiedtman had built for his family. It even had a darkroom because he was a camera buff.

We stayed in a motel, but they came and took us all over San Francisco, down the Crookedest Street in the World, up to Nob Hill hotel for drinks, and to a beautiful park, on to the coast to a restaurant that had one whole side with windows looking out over the water where we could watch all kinds of boats--some Europe bound. This was so interesting while eating. I think that was called Fisherman's Wharf. Even if it was May, the climate there we needed a suit and light top coat. We certainly enjoyed all this and invited them to come to Maine one day.

A strange thing happened while I was sitting here writing this part of my memoirs. The telephone rang and it was Gertrude Schiedtman calling from San Francisco. I hadn't heard from that family for a long time, so that was sort of eerie, or mental telepathy. Everything out there was okay, but she was thinking about me, in May 1999.

I want to say that the summer we moved back to Manchester, near Augusta, Gertrude and her daughter came to visit us, and we took them on a trip to see OUR coast for one thing. I still can't get over the phone call.

Now back to our trip home from California. We picked up our neighbor at Bakersfield. She was in a bad mood because she had tickets for the next night to see Lawrence Welk. However, it was the time we said we'd meet her so we had to leave. We took a different way home.

We didn't care too much about seeing Las Vegas, but our rider did so we drove there first and I would say all the glamour, the marriage chapels, and the gambling machines, even in the stores, sort of turned us all off, and we quickly made for the mountains to see the beautiful parks and Bryce Canyon. We thought now that it was nearly June the snow would be practically gone, but we did encounter mountain roads covered with ice and snow which we were glad to drive over safely. We enjoyed Zion National Park and Bryce Canyon in Utah. I thought Bryce was unusually beautiful and different. The rock formations were all terra cotta and looked like church steeples. However, we were glad to get out of the mountains and head for home through Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, New York, and into New England. It was an educational trip, and a

safe one, but we all were glad to get back to Maine again. And on to our winter vacation weeks in Florida.

However, before we have to make another move and leave Houlton, I want to tell you about the town of Houlton. As I have probably explained, it is located on the border of Canada, New Brunswick, Aroostock County in Maine. Where Houlton is, it is surrounded by many hills and beautiful farm lands. As one rides through the country you can enjoy all the colorful farmlands where crops of potatoes, sugar beets, broccoli, and wheat cover the landscape, looking like a beautiful patchwork quilt.

We are near enough to Katahdin State Park which is in a beautiful place to take our out of state visitors to see the wild life, the lakes, and of course, Mt. Katahdin. One often sees bears, deer, moose, and small wild life, a beautiful place to spend a day. With our eight-room house we could enjoy lots of company. It was in a corner lot, in fact two house lots, so I could have a nice yard for flowers and a vegetable garden. I planted a pink flowering crab tree at the street corner, and people tell me it's so beautiful people come to see it. All in all, we all loved Houlton. It was a college town. Ricker College had a good reputation for years. Its only drawback was that it didn't have a large campus, so now Houlton has lost their college.

For quite a few years we vacationed in the winter months for a few weeks at Silver Blade. It was sold, so we went to Redington Beach which was very nice. Then came a time when we felt we'd like to look for a place to retire after Don worked his 25 years with the State of Maine.

We were still in Houlton when Mom Reeck began having serious trouble with her swallowing food. In fact I noticed one day she was a bit blue when she swallowed, so I said we'd better go down to the doctor and see what he suggests. He right away said it was a hernia rupture of her esophagus, and she should get down to Portland. He recommended a doctor who could help her. So we took her to Portland, 120 miles from Houlton, and he diagnosed it right away after x-rays and said he could operate, but it would be very serious on account of her age -- 87. The fact was that the esophagus had ruptured through her diaphragm and he would have to remove some ribs in her back to be able to close the rupture. Of course, now Mother Reeck knew the seriousness of this surgery but said she knew she couldn't live with this condition, so she agreed to let him operate.

She came through the operation, and after a week or more of extensive care being rolled back and forth on an ironing board contraption, she was taken to a floor where she would be right near the desk. We then drove down to visit her. Donald hated to sit around the hospital all day, so he went to the movies. He wanted me to go too, but I said I came down to be with his mother. It was a good thing because while I was there she had an embolism and I quickly summoned the emergency to come. Well, they felt they had done well to save her and she seemed to progress well after that, so we took her home in a couple of weeks. It was a long time before she could

tolerate solid food but, as usual, came back quite normally, but I could see it had taken its toll. Still we went to Florida on Don's vacation that year.

Again, old friends found us a place in Pinellas Park, not far from St. Pete and the beaches. A nice 4-room villa--two bedrooms, living room, kitchen, Florida room and bath, a garage also and with a nice back yard where I could grow things, and a small front yard which the Association kept in good shape. We rented for a year, and then in the second year we looked and looked at other similar places but none were so homelike as Springwood I. Again we were fortunate to buy it and have enjoyed it. Don passed away 11 years later in 1985. I wondered if I could handle it alone, but here I am in 1999, still in my own home, and at this point struggling to stay here.

Going back to Augusta after leaving Houlton was another move we hated to make because we'd loved our home there in Houlton and made so many good friends. When Don came home and said they wanted him back in Augusta, I didn't know how I could move now into this four-room house. Mom Reeck had begun acting not quite herself when I said we are moving again. She seemed to fall apart. I found a newly built condo in Manchester, Maine. Going from eight rooms to the new four-room condo we were not able to keep everything. It meant I had to sort out things to take and things to leave. We bought this in 1974.

One day I opened up the attic door and it was filled with things I had bought from Mother's, even her old Swedish trunk, things I kept for our Church craft makings by my group, etc., etc. I even had a dressmaker's form which I sold to a very intoxicated man who came. I had to laugh when he went out singing with that body under his arm. He said his lady always wanted one.

However, this was about the only thing I laughed about. Mom Reeck was saying I was selling her things without asking her, real mean about little things. But fact is, I kept more of her things than I did those that Don and I had bought and treasured.

Don was now working in Augusta, leaving me to do all the packing, selling, yard sales, etc. Two days before the movers were to come, I collapsed and had to be hospitalized. I hadn't packed any of my kitchen things yet, so was in a tizzy, but my doctor said that with my blood pressure so high, I would have to rest. So my dear girl friends got together and packed all my kitchen things. I sure did appreciate it. I had to sign myself out of the hospital to go when the movers went, so you can imagine what a frustrating time it was finding my kitchen things when I landed in Augusta. Fortunately, we all lived through it.

Our condo in Manchester now had four big lovely rooms and bath overlooking all this beautiful countryside, and about a mile or so from Don's office and the city of Augusta, our Capital. Also only about a couple of miles to Lake Cobbosseecontee where we had spent over ten happy years, able to enjoy all my family, my brother's wife and children, and near old friends we had made all of my growing years.

Having a newly built home in such a lovely setting, I got permission to plant all the flowers I enjoyed around the building, and as we were on the end side, I had a nice garden bordering all the property. There were eight apartments in each house, only ours had a good basement for meetings for all and lovely store rooms for garden tools, all things not being used. To be back with these old friends so nearby, and my brother's family, it was nice. Also, my very dear cousins, Dorothy and Marion, whom I had missed in our many years away. Not far from Waterville were the nephew of Mother's she had sponsored from Sweden had moved and lived and raised his two sons, Ralph and Roy Gross and their children.

Our address is Manchester, Maine, between Augusta and Winthrop. Now we were not too far away from Augusta. So now, after we were finally settled and everyone seemed happy, we kept on traveling back to Florida and Springwood I for three months in the winter for many years. Don had retired on August 2, 1975. While we were in Manchester, Mom Reeck fell at my nephew Walter Bailey's home one day and fractured her hip. It mended well, and she was back on her feet in no time. It was just a break and no new hip replacement.

We all enjoyed our three months in Florida in the winter until we could see it was getting a little much traveling so far, especially with Mom Reeck. She was getting very difficult. Mom had some very disturbing times, mentally, before we made any more decisions about moving permanently. Finally we had to admit her to a Nursing Home in Augusta and was diagnosed as alienation, mental state, unable to cooperate or handle her medical needs, so she deteriorated very fast. She was only in the Nursing Home for a few weeks and passed away on July 4, 1979, when everyone seemed to be away. So we had no services in Maine, only at the grave site with some Reeck family and friends in Staten Island, New York.

Now we were able to make our decision about selling our lovely Manchester condo. It sold to the first person who looked at it, so it was another scramble to sell all of our beautiful new furniture we got when we got married, and now all of Mom and Dad Reeck's things. We just had to send them all for auction. So many of the antiques we practically gave away, but we had them appraised. Our doctor said that Mom Reeck's illness probably had been coming on for a long while. Now it is called Alzheimer's disease.

So now back to Springwood I in Pinellas Park in Florida. We were then busy having to buy new furnishings, although there were a few good pieces in the house which I refinished. We had bought all our personal things, like lamps, dishes, pictures, etc., with us in our car. So now we finished payments on our Pinellas Park home in Florida February 4, 1979. Here again we have to leave so many friends we had made in and around our condo in Manchester. The lady, Mini Hill, has the apartment across from Don and I, and she had taken two floors, her basement storage rooms, and made into another living room, kitchenette, bath and excellent taste, very posh her upstairs to first floor was a pretty winding stairway, two bedrooms with baths, nice

kitchen and living room, plus balcony. She was a general's widow, nice, and very generous, plus a great sport. She rented a hotel room for all her bridge friends, and had a big party every once in a while to which we were always invited. Now she has moved to the West coast of Florida also.

Also in a next apartment building, another young woman and I had a nice vegetable garden in a field across from our apartments, and how I enjoyed working in that, plus being able to get in a lot of golf. Now Don and I started to think of all the trips he and I would have liked to enjoy but were never free to do so, only the one to Sweden.

The months after Mom Reeck passed away, we felt very much alone and very weary. So many of our friends had talked about a wonderful trip from Calgary, Canada to Lake Louise and Victoria. So we took that in August 1979. We joined a group of about our own age and found it to be all our friends had talked about. The beautiful lakes, Mt. Glazier, Beauty, and Lake Louise, Butchart Gardens in Victoria, were all places one would love to go back to and were all delightful. I won the nice gift for guessing the miles we had traveled--just a wild guess--it was 1,980, so everyone thought I had some kind of a brain, which of course helped my ego. Our next trip was planned from Florida to Hawaii, our first Christmas to be alone. We joined a tour by Tauck Tours and it was, I would say, one of the best tours. We stayed at the Royal Hawaiian, at that time owned by the Sheraton Hotels. It is on the beach. This is Christmas 1980.

At this time of year, the poinsettias, single and double, the hibiscus and many other flowers are everywhere you look growing out of that lava ground. Many places they have trimmed the trees with just poinsettia blooms, very beautiful and unusual. On that trip we visited all the islands, even Molokai, the leper colony island. There we stood on high ground and looked down on the leper colony on the beach. Only the Sheraton has a hotel on that island, at this time. A nice golf course, no gift shops, and they grew macadamia nuts. They grow in a rather unusual way, so I can see why they are expensive to buy. A small branch will hold about six to eight nuts, in a protective coating. Under the coating is a shell very hard to crack, and if one tries to get that out whole it's quite a job.

This island is not listed on many tourist programs, and I wondered how the hotel dining room would be so full. I asked someone not on our tour, and she said "We all like to come to this island to get a rest and good food."

All of the islands have their special beauty, but we never found lovely sand like we have on our beaches. It is very coarse, not white, and we saw one beach with black sand. The surf everywhere is beautiful, and it must be great fun to enjoy being out in it.

Now since the Japanese have sort of taken over the islands, they have built high rises along most beaches, so unless they take very expensive tours they don't

get to see much beach. However, we both wanted to go back sometime to play golf on Molokai, but I understand that it is now not a tourist island.

1981 - Spring

A group of Pinellas Park, Springwood I people wanted us to join them on a cruise to the Caribbean. There was the Rev. Baim and his wife Lucy, and her sister Sue Crossett, a man and his wife who were on the Insurance Committee with Donald, and a few others. We liked them all and we hadn't been on a Caribbean cruise yet, so we went on the Victoria. It was a nice ship with a German crew and German cooking. The Rev. and family asked us to join them at their table. When one goes on a ship, the first thing they ask you is "How many and who you want at your table." So we were happy to be with them, plus two other people.

They were great traveling companions for conversation, playing games, and enjoying our stops. We visited three islands, San Juan, St. Thomas--good shopping, St. Vincent, the Breadfruit Island of Capt. Bligh, La Guara, toured Caracas, the Capitol of Venezuela, Aruba the Dutch island. Here, they said, people threw all their garbage out on the lawns and the goats ate everything. Martinique--known as Little France and birthplace of Empress Josephine. There we went up into the rain forest and enjoyed beautiful flowers and wild growth of all kinds. Back to San Juan on the eighth day. A very smooth sailing, good crew, and good food. Enjoyable table mates. It's nice to visit each island because they are quite different.

1982

Donald was intrigued with the Norway. He was right. It looked like the largest and prettiest ship afloat. So we booked passage on that in September 1982 for a cruise on the Caribbean again. It is an outstanding ship out there more than all as far as luxury and beauty. It's 1,000 feet long. Must use a tender to take passengers off to the islands, and beside the QE II, the QE II looks like a row boat.

We visited St. Thomas first and went up to the top of the island to see Blue Beards Castle. There was very good entertainment on the ship, famous people in the lounge and concert hall. We had delicious meals, and the whole set up was grand.

They took us to the island they owned for scuba diving, and so many do love and were equipped with scuba diving gear. Don and I just walked the beach and saw that others practiced their golf there so we just picked up used golf balls. What a thing to do on a beach!! We stopped there for a picnic dinner supplied by the ship. It was all more of the luxury of the ship everyone enjoyed. So now Don's appetite was appeased and I, too, enjoyed all the luxury.

Later on in 1982 we took another cruise to the Caribbean on the SS Rhapsody, with some of our bridge group. Really quite a few from Springwood went to the Caribbean again. This was a ship made over from the Swedish ship we went to

Sweden on and now the French had taken it over. It was a very happy ship, and I kept thinking it reminded me of our Swedish ship, but I didn't know it was until we got home. All the foods were prepared with French flavor, and the entertainment was very Parisian-like and very good. We went to the Cayman Islands on that ship.

Don had five young ladies at his table, so you can know he was in his glory. There was Betty Dunmore, Cleo Black, Flo Farley, and Marge Berkshead. For some reason many people, including my husband, were so happy to get a trip booked on the end of the world trip of the QE II, catching up with it on April 3, Easter Sunday in Hawaii 1983.

Don and I decided to take it. While we were waiting at the St. Pete Airport we joined a group of three other couples who felt the same way my Donald did about it. We all wanted to be on this trip. They were very pleasant couples from Top of the World, Clearwater, so we sort of joined them and spent our trip enjoying them all the way. In fact, I keep in touch with just one of the survivors on that trip. The Good Lord has taken four of them home.

We flew to Hilo on the isle of Kona, spent the night on the ship. In the morning buses took us around the isle to the beaches and up to view the volcano areas. The people in Kona put on a show for us on their glass bottom boat next morning and after that we headed out for Hollywood, California. We all started finding a little fault with the ship. The seats in all the rooms and lounge were not too comfortable, and the windows were not too clean. After all, it was on a world trip. Arriving in Hollywood, California, we spent the day being shown around Hollywood, at Disney World, and MGM's studios we saw the artists working and also a complete animal show.

Next day we headed for Acapulco. On the way there, one of the engines on the QE II had trouble, and the captain of our ship said we would be better there awhile while they sent to England for a motor. Some of the members had planned to stop at Caracas to visit and mail letters, so the ship had to send a small vessel for them to go, and the rest of us sat in the ocean all day. Of course, there was open bar for those who imbibed. However, next day we headed for Acapulco and landed where so much poverty is seen. We were taken up the mountain where all the tourists go. We spent a day and night there in a lovely hotel. Saw high divers diving off the cliffs and enjoying the beautiful scenery and watching the golfers.

Next day we headed for the Panama Canal. This big ship seemed to just squeeze through it. We were disappointed not to see any wild life on the shores. We felt no bouquets for old QE II.

The last night we were on, Robert Guillaîne, the actor, entertained. Among the humorous things he asked the audience if they thought the Queen of England would go buy her Easter outfit at a garage sale. Well, you should have heard the uproar. He almost got yanked off the stage. Can you imagine him saying such a thing on an



English ship? My husband saw him next day down in the gym, and he admitted he'd made a big error.

We went on to St. Thomas for a stop, and then back to Ft. Lauderdale. The end of our cruises on April 14, 1983.

At this point, I think we both had all our cruising satisfied, and Donald remembered that I still wanted a land trip while we were still able. So in August 1983 we made arrangements for that land trip to Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Northern Italy, and France, and being sure, we were booked on a day on the Rhine River. I have always been anxious to know how they could plant all those grape arbors on those high hills on both sides of the Rhine, and also build castles and churches there too. I was surprised to see all the heavy cargo boats on the River, a really beautiful sight all the way we traveled.

We had flown into Wiesbaden and they took us to a town called Ostrich where there was a dock to get the boat on the Rhine. I hadn't made a stop by stop record of this whole trip as I was sure I could follow it from where the stops were, but all the brochures were written in German, so being unable to read German, I have to recall all our stops from memory.

Our first stop in Heidelberg, home of the beautiful university that put out a recording of the show there, wonderful voices but I can't remember the name of those recordings. There was also a huge castle there upon a great hill looking down on the city of Heidelberg. After that stopover, we went through the Black Forest, named as such for its density of very dark green foliage, but a tourist attraction.

On now to Switzerland with its beautiful high mountains and scary winding roads.

Next a ride up the Stansorhorn Mt. to a restaurant on top of the mountain overlooking beautiful lakes at Innsbrook and Interlaken, the monument in carved rock of the lion at Lucerne. On to Zermatt to take a train up the mountain at Zermatt where are stayed a couple of days at the Montarosa hotel. One morning, early, a herd of goats passed through the city to new feeding land. This was a sight. While there Don took another mountain train, cog train, to go up further in the mountains to see glaciers and a water fall coming down the mountains. I didn't go but took my camera and enjoyed sitting on a bench in a park looking right up to the mountains, looking tall and slim like a needle, supposed to be a mile high.

Richard Burton wrote in his book that he always wanted to go to Zermatt so he could scale this mountain and spit a mile. Since I read this I always wanted to see this unusual mountain. Now I have a perfect picture of it in my Florida room, and it sure is unusual and beautiful.

The skiers going by me, sitting there comfortably in the park, and they are on their way to climb that mountain. I'll never forget that beautiful sight of the Matterhorn. After leaving Zermatt we went on to St. Moritz -- beautiful lakes, and mountain not so high. We stayed at the Hauser Hotel just for a night and to a Rhine valley village, Martigny, still in Switzerland. From there to Mt. Blanc, France to see glaciers and villages there, on by ferry to Lake Maggiore to Italy. There we visited the Abbey in Dolomite, to Lake Geneva, to city of Geneva, UN building, and international union building, and had dinner at Johannis Couriers Pine, at pub in Geneva a beef fondue party.

On to Vienna where we saw the Von Trapp home where the "Sound of Music" was made, also the Castle Schanbauer, a tour of the castle and the gardens, a show at Bear Hall, Munich, Germany, and the Peace Gate. At Rothenberg, Germany we visited a walled city. It was so neat, spotless streets and window boxes at every window on homes there. It seemed unreal. And the walled city had a 70-year-old church, and at Hohen Salzburg, a fortress.

To old Salzburg, a very beautiful and old city, and back to Munich to take our plane home. A most enjoyable trip, but a bit too long.

This would be our last trip together although it was far from our thoughts because we planned to go to Alaska for our 50th anniversary in 1985. It wasn't in the cards for us because Don passed away on February 2, 1984. It has been a grief I will always live with because we were always in accord with our plans, and now I feel, even though I have loving nieces and nephews, I am quite alone in all the decisions I must make. Since my three fractures, the last one leaving me with a bone injury, the femur, that was crushed so badly it could never be set so I could walk safely again. I was given a choice, have my right leg amputated or never walk normally again. I chose to have my leg so this is why I am still handicapped. I am told now in 1999 that I can have a shoe made to fit my right foot and built up 2 inches to match my left foot, thereby giving me better balance in a walker. This I am waiting for in 1999 at age 93 years. Please pray for me that I can still have help in managing at home until my good Lord calls me.

After Donald passed away, a friend, a cousin of my dear Mary Mook, said she would like to go to Alaska with me as Donald had planned. It was a pleasant trip, but we didn't care especially about Alaska. It was very damp and very expensive. Too many days of hard freeze ruined some of the fir trees and left the highways like plowed fields.

After this lady, Pauline Ring, said she would like to go to Hawaii for Christmas, I felt it would be good for me to get away too, so we two went to Hawaii for Christmas 1994. After this I felt I had better face my loneliness, get busy with all my chores and obligations. This I have tried, but since all my fractures and illnesses, I have tried to make myself contented with my lot. Now at this age so many of my dear friends have been taken away, Pauline Ring among them, so from now on my story will no longer

be a joy to write about. However, at this moment I have no pain and I hope to be home in my walker one day. I know my Lord will be with me always just as He's been all these years. I still have many good friends, thoughtful and kind, also a loving family. Although they are far away, I know they wish me well. My nephew Walter Bailey and his wife Shirley and their family have been wonderful support, and I hope this resume of my life, as they never really knew me, will be interesting and thought provoking to read.

I have just reread my story "A Letter from Aunt Elsie". Even though I mentioned my brother George, his good wife Bessie, and their five sons in some instances, I did not tell you about how proud I've always been of my brother and his faith and confidence in himself. Even though he had only a grammar school education, he was bound to achieve his life interest in the Mechanical Arts. I did write about the help he had in attaining this interest in only two years and then so confident in his ability and returned to Maine. He found a good job right away at the R. P. Hazzard Shoe factory repairing their machines. He soon felt very comfortable in his work, fell in love with a very nice girl who worked there and was ready to marry and make a home for them. He was married at the age of 19 to Bessie Weeks. It was a very happy and productive marriage, with their five sons which today has grown into its sixth generation of over one hundred.

I regret very much that I had to be far away pursuing my education or working, so I missed all those young happy years. Only when I had a bit of free time to visit my Mother did I see all the happiness this family had provided for her. All five boys were very close and are happily married. Unfortunately, one, named Calvin, was born with a congenital heart. He passed away at the age of 28 years leaving a wife, son and daughter. Their mother, Helen Ash, never remarried, but saw to it they had a good education. The boy, a college graduate in the Mechanical Arts, is a teacher in a Shop in Gardiner High School, and the daughter is a secretary in Social Security.

The other four brothers were Walter, Robert, John and Norman. The loss of that brother has and always will be a great sadness for those four remaining healthy brothers.

I wish to say that the decision of four of my nieces and nephews, plus a friend took a tour to Sweden in 1999 to visit their Swedish roots. The weather was poor when they were there, but they saw and were entertained by 15 of the Swedish relatives.

There was Walter and Shirley, their daughter Cathy, and a granddaughter Margaret, age 10, plus Cathy's friend who made the trip -- three generations of Baileys. It was a wish I had long hoped for, and I hope it meant a lot to them all. I feel my Mother too would have been very happy about that. I am sure they found a very nice welcome from all the relatives. I just hope more will go again, or perhaps keep in touch.

I missed so many happy times with them all, not able to be at their weddings, and neither did they get to mine. I feel I know this second generation and all have been very thoughtful of me. I only hope that one day someone in that group will write a story about that happy family. Their father, George, was a 32nd Degree Mason, and I know he lived up to all its teachings, and now his children are following in his beliefs.

Two of the very serious operations I have had since I lost my dear husband Donald in 1984, my family, Walter and Shirley, have come to help place me in an assisted care home until I was able to fend for myself. I since have leaned on them very heavily, and now they are very important to me and dear to me in every way. Without my dear Lord, my many good friends, and Walter and Shirley, I would be a very unhappy person, also my dear friends from Maine -- Mary Mook and her husband George.

As you will see since I started my story, "A Letter from Aunt Elsie" in 1998, I have now reached the millennium year 2000. My age is 94 years.

I am now a semi-invalid. My only means of transportation are occasionally my walker, but for the long haul, I am wheelchair bound. I have no pain which is a blessing, and have been well cared for by my very knowledgeable and caring cardiologist, Dr. Felix Hernandez, and usually a few hours four or five days a week by a caring home assistant, Dawn Attardo.

It now is the Fall of 2000. I will end my story here. You all have my love and blessings. The only legacy I have for you, my nieces and nephews of the six generations of Baileys, is my story "A Letter from Aunt Elsie."

My love and prayers for you one and all.

Aunt Elsie

## *ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE*

Words by Gary Driskell

I've always heard there is a land  
beyond the mortal dreams of man,  
Where every tear will be left behind,  
but it must be in another time.  
Oh, there'll be an everlasting light  
shining purest holy white.  
And every fear will be erased,  
but it must be in another place.

So I'm waiting for another time and  
another place where all my hopes  
and dreams will be captured  
with one look at Jesus' face.  
Oh, my heart's been burnin',  
my soul keeps yearnin',  
Sometimes I can't hardly wait  
for that sweet, sweet someday when  
I'll be swept away to another time  
and another place.

I've grown so tired of earthly things,  
they promise peace but furnish pain.  
All of life's sweetest joys combined  
could never match those in another time.  
And though I've put my trust in Christ  
and felt His spirit move in my life,  
I know it's truly just a taste of  
His glory in another place.